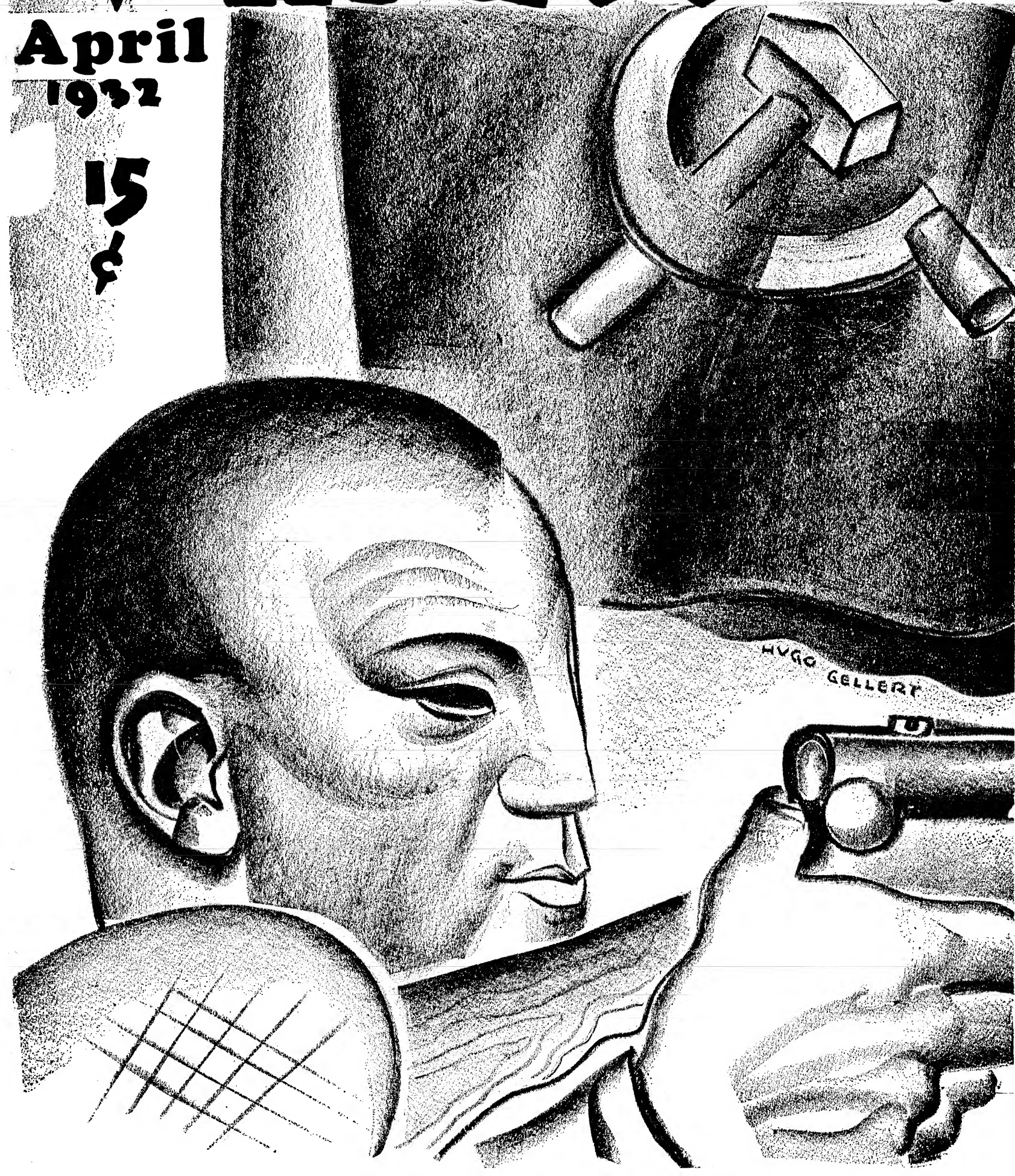


new masses

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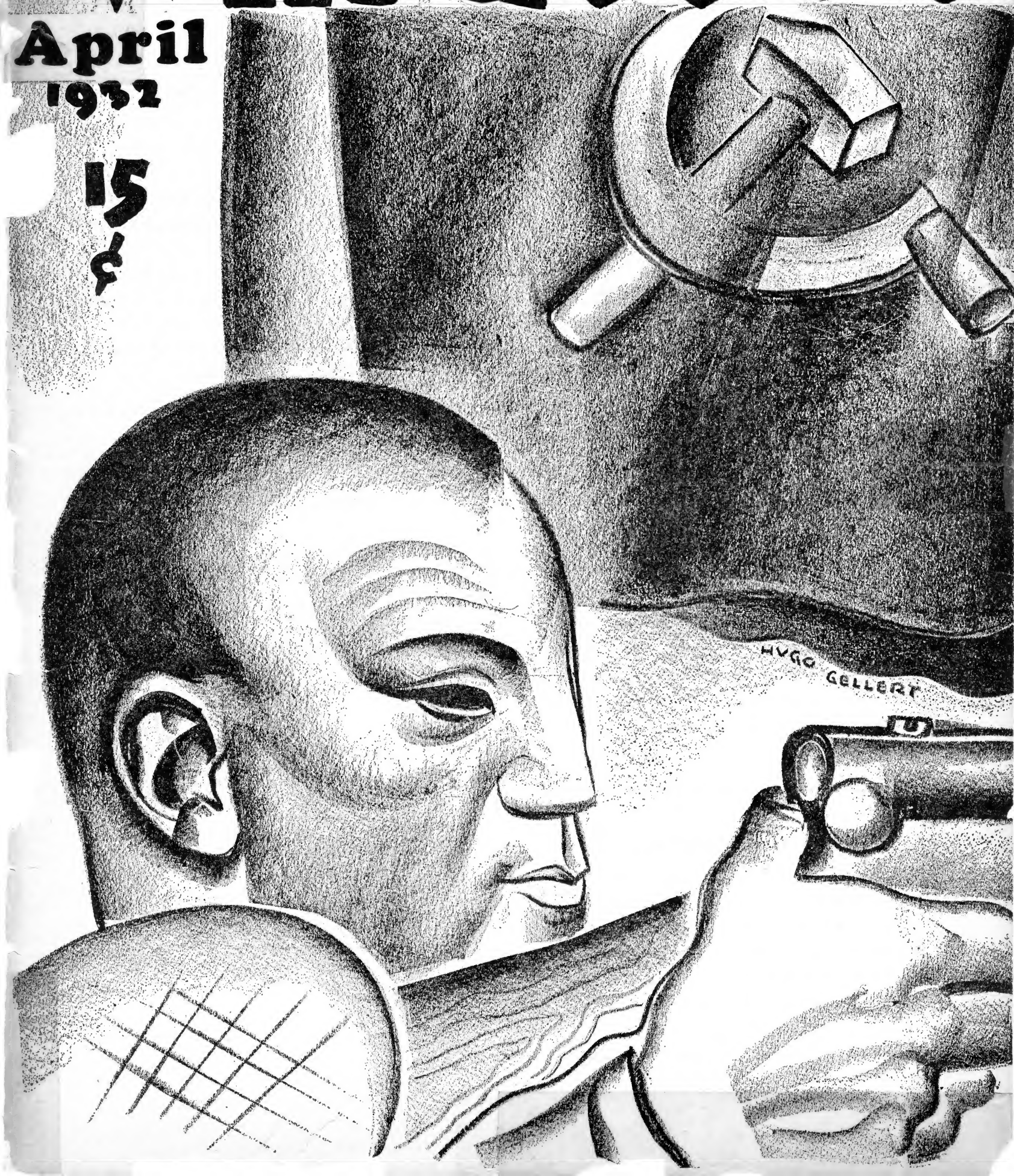
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Phil Bard

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THE FAR-EASTERN FRONT

Chinese and Japanese troops are engaged in a desperate struggle on the outskirts of Shanghai. The Japanese have been unable to make any headway despite a month of heavy fighting with superior numbers and equipment. They have been compelled to increase their forces from the original landing party of 5,000 sailors and marines to 100,000 regular troops, and are battering Shanghai with powerful tanks, airplanes, siege guns, and bombs.

Press dispatches report that the Japanese are not confining their activities to Shanghai. They are organizing and equipping Russian white guards in Harbin for an attack on Soviet territory. The Soviet government has demanded an explanation of this aggressive maneuver. Commissar of War Voroshiloff has called upon the Red Army to be prepared to defend the Soviet Union against white guard conspiracies in Mongolia and Siberia; and General Bluecher-Galen, commander of Soviet forces in the Far East at Vladivostok, has issued a warning that the Red Army will defend the workers' and peasants' republic against all invasion. For a number of years Soviet authorities have exposed plots for military aggression against their country, but even the most sympathetic bourgeois correspondents in Moscow were in the habit of dismissing these exposures either as propaganda or as a bolshevik "bogey". The events of the past few months have shown that this "bogey" is a fact which may have the most serious consequences for the whole world. The danger of a new world war and in particular war provocation against the Soviet Union is imminent.

It is characteristic of capitalism that at the time when Japanese troops were bombarding Chapei and killing thousands of Chinese civilians, and when Japanese, American, British, French, and Italian warships were racing to Shanghai to support the fleets already stationed there, the "disarmament" conference opened at Geneva. The chief task of the League of Nations and the "disarmament" conference is to conceal from the workers and farmers in capitalist countries the new imperialist war. Great Britain supports the partition of China. It is attempting to set up a united front with France in Europe, and to revive its old alliance with Japan in the Far East. France openly supports Japanese imperialism in the Orient. It has loaned the Japanese government about \$300,000,000 and is selling it huge quantities of munitions and war supplies. France is doing this in order to strengthen its hegemony in Europe in the struggle against the German revolution, and to prepare for intervention against the Soviet Union. The United States also would be pleased to see a war between Japan and the Soviet Union which would weaken both countries and open the way for American domination in the Pacific.

The war of the Chinese people at Shanghai is a national revolutionary war against Japan's imperialist aggression. This war is being sabotaged by the party of the Chinese bourgeoisie, the Kuomintang, and its military representative, Chiang Kai-Shek.

The Chinese bourgeoisie offered no resistance to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, and now refuses to send troops, money or supplies for the defense of Shanghai. Japan's attack is a move not only to destroy the soviets in the interior of China but to subjugate the entire Chinese people. In this looting expedition it is being supported by other imperialist powers, who look forward to a division of the spoils in the partition of China. The Chinese workers and peasants realize this. The troops defending Shanghai are being aided by the workers and peasants of that region who feed them, help build trenches, and carry on guerrilla warfare in the rear of Japanese lines. The Nineteenth Route Army is becoming revolutionary, and is already organizing soldiers' soviets.

The shells crashing in Shanghai are only the latest chapter in a long story which the reader who wishes to know the background of the war in the Far East will find accurately presented and carefully analyzed in Ray Stewart's new pamphlet tracing the development of imperialism and revolution in China to the present day.* The struggle for the control of China began in the middle of the nineteenth century. America, Britain, France and Japan seized the largest share of the booty—Chinese labor, markets, and resources. Czarist Russia and Germany were also active participants in the struggle, but the Russian revolution ended Russian imperialism, and Germany was stripped of its loot by rival powers after the world war.

China is a rich field for exploitation. Its land area is far larger than that of the United States. Its population is over 400,000,000. It has great natural resources and an undeveloped economy. The Chinese market is an important outlet for the manufacturers of the advanced capitalist countries. From 1901 to 1905 Chinese foreign trade averaged less than \$4,000,000 a year; in 1929 it exceeded \$1,500,000,000. A large amount of foreign capital has been invested in Chinese mines, factories, railways, and government securities. The total of foreign investments in China is estimated at more than three billion dollars. More than 90 per cent of this sum is in the hands of Japanese, British and American capitalists.

To secure these markets, the imperialist powers have bombarded Chinese cities in the past as well as the present. They have set up their own courts on territory seized from the Chinese. They have controlled Chinese finance, currency, essential railways, mines and industries; they have kept China in political and economic slavery. The United States has participated in this looting of China. American warships have shelled Chinese cities; American courts function in Chinese territory; and American marines and soldiers have long been garrisoned in Peiping, Tientsin and Shanghai.

* *War In China*, by Ray Stewart. *International Pamphlets*, No. 19. Ten Cents.

hai. The warships and troops which were recently rushed to Shanghai were only reinforcements to protect the interests of American bankers and merchants, their giant industrial trusts and monopolies.

China has been the ultimate goal of American imperialist expansion across the Pacific. It was for this purpose that the United States acquired Hawaii, the Philippines, Guam, and other islands, all of which are necessary stepping stones for American imperialism on its way to China. The American Pacific coast is too far from China for American warships and airplanes to use it as a base. It is necessary to have naval bases on these islands far out on the Pacific where the United States stores gasoline, coal, munitions, and builds drydocks for battleships and submarines. From Alaska, Hawaii and the Philippines, the United States can strike at Japan, or at British or French possessions in or near China.

American bankers and trusts have about \$250,000,000 invested in China, most of which is concentrated in the vicinity of Shanghai. In this region Americans own banks, factories, power stations and telephone lines. The Standard Oil interests, controlled by the Rockefellers, and the Electric Bond and Share Company, dominated by Morgan, are the principal American investors in China.

American trade with the Chinese amounted to \$190,000,000 in 1930. More than three fifths of this trade was carried on through the port of Shanghai. In the Shanghai region American capitalists have been making great gains at the expense of their British rivals. In 1910 only one per cent of Shanghai's trade was with the United States, which in this respect was far behind Britain, Germany, Japan and France. By 1928 the American share in Shanghai's trade had risen to 16 per cent, and by 1930 it had outstripped all of its imperialist rivals.

However, the largest investors in China are the British and Japanese imperialists. British investments total about \$1,250,000,000. A large part of this investment is in the island of Hongkong, but a considerable portion is invested in Shanghai and other cities in the Yangtse valley. In this region American, British and Japanese imperialism sharply compete. Japanese investments are about equal to the British; three quarters of them are in the Manchurian provinces, whose entire economic life Japan dominates. Japan owns the principal railways, mines, factories, buildings, blast furnaces and power plants. Like England and America, Japan also has large investments in the Yangtse valley. Chinese trade is of decisive importance to Japan. Imports from China constitute about 10 percent of all Japanese imports, while 16 percent of its total exports go to China. Japan depends on China for a large portion of the iron and coal essential to its industries. Korea and the Island of Formosa, both rich in resources, were seized from China and are now possessions of Japan.

The French are primarily interested in the extreme southern provinces of China. Late in the nineteenth century the French imperialists seized large portions of Chinese territory now incorporated in the French colony of Indo-China. Today France is trying to obtain the Yunan province north of Indo-China. The battle for territory, markets and resources continues more ruthlessly than ever. Each power is trying to push its way into the other's "sphere of influence." The growing weakness of the British empire offers the other powers an opportunity for loot, but Britain still has its tremendous navy with naval bases in the Pacific. It is ready to fight rival powers which threaten its possessions. Britain's formidable rivals are the United States and Japan. Both are openly preparing for an armed clash to settle their differences in the Pacific.

This conflict is taking place in a historic epoch when imperialism is rapidly decaying and the Soviet Union is building socialist society. The world of capitalism and the world of socialism are engaged in a decisive struggle. China stands at the crossroads of these two conflicting civilizations. Already China has within it the elements of both worlds. In Shanghai, Peiping, Tientsin, Hankow and other cities are the troops of the imperialist powers and the armies of the Chinese generals and capitalists, starving, torturing and murdering the Chinese and seeking to perpetuate in China the ruthless profit system. At the same time, in the factories and fields of China the workers and the farmers are struggling to free themselves from imperialism and to create a soviet government embracing the whole of their vast country.

Foreign penetration in China has resulted in revolutionary changes. Fifty or sixty years ago China was a semi-feudal country without modern industry; it had no factories or railways. Even today it is a primitive, semi-feudal agricultural country, with the

great mass of its population working on small farms without modern tools. But in many cities, especially in seacoast and river ports, factories have sprung up. Many of these were erected by foreign capitalists who have made enormous profits by working low-paid Chinese labor twelve, fourteen and sixteen hours a day. Others were erected by Chinese businessmen who exploited Chinese labor with the same brutality. Today there are about 1500 modern factories in China in addition to a large number of modernized plants. It is estimated that they employ three or four million workers. These industrial workers are the backbone of the revolutionary movement now sweeping China.

Allied with the working class is the great mass of Chinese peasants who with their families constitute more than 70 percent of China's population. They work small patches of soil which they own themselves or rent from landlords. Even in the best years they live on the verge of starvation. They are robbed by their landlords, money lenders, government tax collectors, and racketeering war lords. Famines wipe out hundreds of thousands every year.

The past decade has witnessed mass revolts of workers and peasants against exploitation. Strikes against low wages and long hours have swept a number of cities. Trade unions have sprung up and expanded very rapidly, and peasant organizations have developed throughout the country. The striking workers found themselves in conflict with foreign factory, mine and railway owners, and learned that the foreign powers were ready to back up their capitalists with warships and cannon, while peasant organizations found themselves in armed conflict with Chinese war lords and tax collectors who were also supported by the foreign powers. Even in these early stages of the Chinese revolution the Communist Party, organized in 1920, played a leading role, directing the struggles of workers and peasants.

At first certain sections of the Chinese business class participated in the struggle against imperialism because Chinese factory owners suffered from foreign competition; but their participation was restrained by fear of the rebelling masses. In 1926-27 the Chinese Nationalist armies drove northward from their base in the city of Canton and gained control of the Yangtse valley. There was a tremendous wave of revolutionary mass enthusiasm; membership in the trade unions and the peasant leagues grew enormously; hundreds of thousands of workers struck for better living conditions and shut down the mills of native as well as foreign factory owners. At this stage the business elements in the so-called Peoples Party (the Kuomintang), fearing that their own interests were threatened, betrayed the revolution and allied themselves with the foreign imperialists against the Chinese workers and peasants. These elements, headed by Chiang Kai-Shek, seized power in April 1927, and set up a government in the city of Nanking on the Yangtse River. They immediately attempted to suppress all Communist and revolutionary elements and to conciliate the imperialist powers. Since 1927 the Nanking regime has slaughtered hundreds of thousands of Chinese workers and peasants, and subjected thousands of mass leaders and revolutionary writers to barbarous tortures before putting them to death.

Despite these massacres, the Chinese revolutionary movement has continued to grow. In the large seacoast and river cities the movement is now underground; in the interior however, the revolutionary workers and peasants not only operate openly but govern large sections of China. Under the leadership of the Communists they have set up Soviets in many sections of south and central China. These Soviets control one-sixth of China's area, and govern a population of about seventy millions. Soviets are functioning in large parts of the provinces of Kiangsi, Honan, Anwei, Hupeh, Hunan, Fukien, and there are Soviet districts in the provinces of Kwangsi, Shansi, Shensi, Szechuan.

On November 7, 1931—the fourteenth anniversary of Russia's bolshevik revolution—the Chinese Soviets held their first national congress and adopted the constitution of the Chinese soviet republic. The Soviets maintain a large and well disciplined Red Army which, with the enthusiastic support of the workers and peasants, has won victory after victory against the Nanking forces. The army consists of about 150,000 men. It is supported by about 200,000 organized peasant troops and Communist Young Guards. These Communist troops have fought their way to within a few miles of Hankow, a few hundred miles from Shanghai.

On September 18, 1931 Japanese troops seized Mukden. They conquered Manchuria and set up a puppet government. At the end of January they launched an offensive in the Yangtse valley



"Another good war, honey, and I'll cover you with diamonds."

Herbert Kruckman

for the purpose of crushing the anti-Japanese boycott and agitation and strengthening the Japanese position in the rich Yangtse provinces. Japan's aims in this war against the Chinese people arise from its imperialist interests. Japanese capitalists depend upon Manchuria's mineral resources. They need in addition Manchuria's vast rolling plains, fertile in wheat, beans, corn and barley. The South Manchurian railroad is the most important Japanese holding in Manchuria and is valued at about \$340,000,000. Japan has dominated the southern part of the three Manchurian provinces since it defeated Russia in 1904-1905. But its domination has never been quite complete. The present war is in part an attempt to complete this domination. But in order to do so Japan must suppress the growing unrest among the Manchurian people. Manchuria's population has increased from 2,000,000 in 1900 to about 30,000,000 in 1930; it consists almost entirely of Chinese pioneer farmers who have settled on the more fertile and less populated plains. Manchurian workers and peasants are resisting Japanese imperialist domination. Peasant bands are continually harassing the Japanese troops, and Japan realizes that it cannot tear Manchuria away from China without destroying the armed Chinese worker and peasant bands fighting for Chinese independence.

The Manchurian peasants have already had a great deal of experience in guerrilla warfare against Chinese war lords and bandits. They are now organizing "partisan" bands similar to those of the Siberian peasants who assisted the Red Army in defeating Kolchak and the Japanese. The resistance of the Manchurian people has already begun to demoralize the Japanese troops and several regiments have had to be recalled.

Japan's campaign in Manchuria is not aimed against the Chin-

ese people alone. It is part of the worldwide preparations for an imperialist war against the Soviet Union. Japan is seeking to establish in northern Manchuria a base for intervention in eastern Siberia. France and Britain have already created a ring of buffer states around the Soviet Union's western frontiers; similarly Japan is setting up a strong base for anti-Soviet preparations in the Far East. Japanese bankers and generals do not conceal their plans for war against the Soviet Union, and American correspondents in China report that by spring Japan plans to seize the Russian part of Sakhalin and the Siberian maritime provinces of which Vladivostok is the center.

These are the aims of the Japanese imperialists; but the Japanese workers and peasants have other aims. They are exploited by the same Japanese capitalists who are shooting Chinese workers and peasants. Two of the five million industrial workers in Japan are unemployed; the other three million work long hours for starvation wages. Strikes and street battles between workers and police took place in recent months in the leading industrial centers of Japan. Walkouts during the first half of 1931 involved 85,000 workers, the largest number of strikers in any six month period in the history of the country. In order to suppress the growing revolt of the workers the Japanese government has outlawed the Communist Party and jailed 2,000 of its members. The real attitude of the Japanese masses toward the imperialist invasion of China was revealed in anti-war demonstrations in Tokyo and other cities and in their struggles against their "own" capitalists.

The war in Shanghai is an attempt to establish a base for the destruction of Soviet China. The United States, which at no time offered any genuine opposition to the Japanese occupation of Man-



*"Another good war, honey, and I'll cover
you with diamonds."*

Herbert Kruckman

churia, is participating in this attempt. Significantly enough the first American warships dispatched from Manila to China were ordered to the upper Yangtse river, where the Chinese Red Army is operating against Hankow. Press dispatches from China report that Rear Admiral Williams, head of the American Yangtse river patrol, took a leading part in the discussions of representatives of the imperialist powers regarding methods of suppressing Chinese "banditry"—the capitalist word for the revolutionary movement in all countries.

However, American imperialism is not entirely complacent about Japan's ambitions in China. Insofar as Japan confines her military operations to attacks on the Chinese workers and peasants and to preparations for a war against the Soviet Union, the United States is prepared to support it. On the other hand, American bankers and businessmen with the vast armed forces at their command will combat any attempt on the part of their Japanese rivals to extend their power in China, especially in the Yangtse valley. The American battle fleet is now concentrated in the Pacific at Hawaii. This display is a warning to Japan that American imperialism is ready to use armed force against Japan's aggression in the scramble for booty in China.

The war in China may soon involve the world in another slaughter even greater than that of the last imperialist war. It will be a war against the Chinese people, a war against the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, a war among the imperialist powers themselves in the struggle for loot. American workers and farmers have nothing to gain but misery and death from an imperialist war, they have everything to gain by fighting against imperialist war, by defending the Chinese people who are struggling to end capitalist exploitation, and by supporting the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union who are building a new world.

To Gerhart Hauptmann

The writers and artists of the John Reed Club greet you not because of what you are now but because of what you were. Nearly forty years have passed since you stirred your country with *Die Weber*. You were a younger man then, sensitively conscious of the inhumanities of a ruthless exploiting capitalism. Your great play pictured this capitalism as a devourer of children; as a system of greed founded on the most sordid of all historical motifs—profits.

But somehow, as you grew older, you lost this feeling and insight. Too much the craftsman and not enough the participant in social struggles, you fell behind the times. You drifted with the tide to old age—heavy with honors bestowed by the very system you had so powerfully condemned in the virile art of your early manhood.

Old and tired social democrats still treasure the memory of that famous first night in the Deutsche Theatre when the old warrior Bebel rose and joined lustily in the singing of the Weavers' Song. But these men look with such a sentimental eye on this early achievement, that the recital of the episode is itself suspect to younger men living not in the world of the nineties but in a world stripped of all sentiment.

We are not interested in the fact that the Kaiser removed his coat of arms from the royal box of the Deutsche Theatre when *The Weavers* played there. We are interested rather in what the Gerhart Hauptmann of today thinks and does about the Weavers of 1932.

We have heard he does not do much if anything. Content to rest upon the laurels of other years the great Gerhart Hauptmann comes to America to accept the hospitality of bourgeois colleges and to dine at the tables of those who share in the exploitation of our own American Weavers.

The days of *The Weavers* have not passed, or perhaps it would be better to say that the days of *The Weavers* were and have come again. The epic of *The Weavers* was an epic of the early stages of capitalism when the bourgeoisie was struggling for domination through the blood and sweat they wrung from a peasantry turned proletariat.

You have lived long enough to see your epic reenacted. You see the same hated class wringing sweat and blood from the descendants of the Silesian weavers of whom you wrote.

Is the German worker better off than when you first knew him?

Japan's Anti-Soviet Plot

On August 3, 1931, General Honjo, Japanese military commander, sent to Minister of War Minami, the following secret memorandum which was subsequently published in the European press:

"In order to strengthen the position of our country and its power, it is necessary immediately to take advantage of the difficult world economic position, as well as of the circumstance that the Five Year Plan in the Soviet Union has not yet been completed and that China is not a united country. All these factors must be utilized for the purpose of the more intense occupation of Manchuria and Mongolia and for realizing the active aims of the former Siberian expedition. The unity of China, the existence of the Soviet Union and the penetration of America in the Far East, all this does not accord with our interest. If we desire to prevent the penetration of America in the Far East, we must strengthen our defensive power and obtain our full material independence. Before we go forward against America, our troops must take up a decisive position in China, occupy the Far Eastern region of the Soviet Union and secure these countries for ourselves. The influence of America in the Philippines must be destroyed and this group of islands brought under our control"

We think not. The temporary advantages he gained from some forty years of expanding imperialism make up neither for the miseries of the era you knew so well nor the terrors of today which capitalism imposes in its death struggle.

You come to America and the ship news reporters merely record the arrival of another great writer from abroad. Why had you nothing to say about Germany? Where do you stand on the momentous issues shaking your country? Is your artist's soul touched by Hitler's theatrics? Do you think the fascist swastika symbolizes the way out? Do you think the continuation of the Bruening-Hindenburg dictatorship will give bread to the starving German masses?

The writers and artists of the John Reed Club believe that the only way out for the millions of exploited workers and peasants of the Reich is to smash capitalism and substitute a workers and peasants government. In 1918, under the leadership of Liebknecht, Luxemburg, and Mehring, the German workers made their first attempt in this direction; they tried again in October 1923. We believe they will try again and that at an early date. We believe they will succeed.

History was not on the side of your weavers because their turn as a class had not yet come. But now the slave-drivers have had their day. History now fights on the side of the new generation of your weavers who live in a period of the decadence, brutality and futility of the system you once condemned, and which you now seem to accept.

We have two purposes in addressing you: first to let you know that not all Americans interested in art bestow the uncritical reverence pouring in on you from the press, the school and the stage in honor of your visit; and second, to let the revolutionary writers and artists of your country know that their comrades in America are not permitting the glamor of the great name of Hauptmann to blind them to his shortcomings.

Your long service in the arts and your advanced age are hardly a defence. Great artists of your generation such as Gorki, Shaw, Rolland and our own Dreiser are doing what you have failed to do. They continue to expose the cruelties of capitalism; they protest against its inhuman exploitation of man by man. They vigorously champion the new order against the old.

Have not the revolutionary writers and artists of your country and the world the right to expect that in this crisis in the history of mankind the author of *The Weavers* shall not be silent?

JOHN REED CLUB

EDMUND WILSON

CLASS WAR EXHIBITS

It used to be the custom in colleges to take the students of sociological courses on tours of the insane asylums and jails. It is a pity that they can't be taken on excursions to Pineville, Kentucky. Not that they would find anything there that they wouldn't be able to find in almost any other American industrial community; but they would see the basic antagonisms involved in the industrial system in their most acute and naked form.

In Pineville, there are not even any pretensions: there is not only, as one of the members of our committee remarked, "no liberalism," there are not even the forms of law. The group of public officials and other leading citizens who met the writers' committee when it first arrived made no bones about the situation. When they cross-examined the committee on their war records and were told that several were ex-service men, one of these dignitaries remarked grimly: "Well, this is another war!"

The writers' committee thus found life in Pineville like a New Masses cartoonist's dream. They were speeded on their way from Knoxville by the news that the N. M. W. U. organizer, Harry Simms, had been shot, and when they arrived in Pineville, they found the only local lawyer who had the courage to defend the miners with machine-guns trained on his windows from the courthouse. In his office was a gasping miner who had just been beaten up by the thugs.

Four members of the committee went ahead to try to get permission for a meeting from the mayor. The mayor, who is a fishy-looking dentist, refused to talk to the committee alone but presently appeared at our hotel with a whole army of leading citizens, including several coal operators. These told us we could not distribute the food or meet the miners in any way inside the city limits.

The trucks in the meantime had been met by deputies and run through and outside the town. We went to the county attorney to ask for permission to meet the miners there and in his office we found Mr. Cleon Calvert, the attorney for the Straight Creek Coal Company, who had already played a prominent part in our conference with the mayor at the hotel. The county attorney, "Spider Smith," is a well-dressed and well-mannered young man with a Phi Beta Kappa key. He had the same boneless wormlike quality as the mayor. Cleon Calvert, on the other hand, was obviously a man of substance and will: he had a positive manner, a loud clear legal voice, a mouth like a mail-slot and a contemptuous smile. He sat beside Mr. Smith's desk and laid down the law in no uncertain terms. The upshot of the interview was that if speeches of any kind anywhere were either made by us to the miners or made by them and listened to by us, we would all be put in jail.

While this had been going on, however, the miners had been getting impatient and other members of the party had begun giving out the food from the trucks. The deputies and thugs, led by John Wilson, the killer, a sinister old buzzard in a black slouch hat and long black coat, poked guns in the ribs of the committee and tried to break into the trucks. When one of the miners started to make a speech, the old buzzard heckled and insulted him until he answered back, then went after him with a gun and drove him off the truck. Doris Parks and Harold Hickerson made speeches and were immediately arrested and put in jail.

We went and called on them there in the evening and our visit gave rise to the rumor that we were preparing a jail-break that night. A flock of deputies gathered at the jail door. And it may have been this fear which caused the citizens to run us out. On the other hand, they had already threatened us and may have decided to do it anyway. In any case, late in the evening, the deputies came for us at our hotel. They took us to the police-court, where we were charged with disorderly conduct. Then the public were excluded—leaving a roomful of deputies (even the high-school boys are deputized in Pineville)—and a grinning lawyer announced that the charges were "quashed for lack of prosecution." Cleon Calvert was there, grinning, too, between the judge's bench and ourselves.

After that, we were taken back to the hotel, told to pack and pay our bills and taken off two by two in cars. When we got to the state-line between Kentucky and Tennessee, we were made to

get out of the cars, the lights were all turned off and Waldo Frank and Allen Taub were beaten about the head—apparently with the butts of guns.

One of the most striking features of our Pineville trip was the attitude of the local press. It is well known that outside newspaper men who attempt to report events in these counties are taking their lives in their hands; and we brought no reporters with us. But when we arrived in Pineville we met a tall youngish red-faced man with bulging eyes and protruding ears who said that his name was Herndon Evans and that he was connected with the local paper. He was, in fact, the editor of the paper and the owner of the only printing plant in town. He was also the local correspondent of the Associated Press. We were told that he had an interest in one of the coal companies and was one of the three or four men who ran the town.

He shook hands with us, asked us questions and took our pictures. Later on, he turned up on our night-ride—going along, as he explained in one of his subsequent dispatches, as a representative of the press. And when Allen Taub was sent down the hill with his face covered with blood, Herndon Evans, who was in the foreground and plainly seen by everybody near and plainly heard by everybody within earshot shouted: "Well, Taub, why don't you make us another speech on constitutional rights? This is the last chance you'll have in Kentucky!"

After this, Evans went back and sent out an A. P. dispatch stating that the committee had left of their own accord and that Allen Taub and Waldo Frank had gotten into a fight and beaten each other up. A later dispatch contained a statement by one T. Edward Asher, described as a member of an eminent Bell County family, to the effect that he had been in the car with Mr. Taub and Mr. Frank and that nobody had attacked them.

Herndon Evans is also the head of the local branch of the Red Cross and thus unites in one person for Pineville the veracity of the press and the benevolence of organized charity. The writers' committee, whose activities had brought it in contact with the law and the press of Bell County, were thankful that they had had no occasion to become objects of Red Cross relief.



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"FOR \$50 WE CAN ARRANGE A FIRST CLASS FUNERAL"



Hero Kruckman

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MELVIN P. LEVY

SPRING IN THE COAL FIELDS

From the swamp the road went up a slow hill, past the mine village now surrounded by a high, steel-wire fence. The state police drove slowly by it on their motorcycles, and at the single gate a soldier stood. The houses were small and dark: the red paint, dullred, almost like dusk, had eaten into them. There were four rows against two narrow streets. But the slope on the other side was already green. Dandelions were sprouting and the children from the strike barracks below picked them for salads. They worked steadily, filling square baskets woven of broad withes or paper bags with their puffed, whitish little hands. But it was spring. The still-chilled air carried a warm, remittent breeze, faintly perfumed with growth and the fresh smell of earth. Occasionally a tremor, a movement of life that began nowhere and swept across them all, aroused the children. They cried out at each other, laughed and shrilled, threw weeds and clumps of earth, wrestled on the ground, their tempers changing swiftly from anger to merriment.

It was spring and they were glad. As each finished his task he left the field reluctantly, paused to examine a stone or plant of interest; and stopped by the wire stockade to peer at the houses where they had been born and in which they had lived, and at the men who stood at the fence and watched the greening hills with dull or restless eyes.

A little girl moved slowly down the road. She stopped, looking to make sure. She turned and cried back up the hill, "The union has come, kids. Come on, the union is here. The truck's come."

The others raised themselves: they stopped their games. The cry passed among them, voice to voice.

"Ah, the union is come kids. Ah, the relief is here."

They all ran down the hill, swept in a mass, like leaves or young cattle, their paper bags and baskets bumping behind them, crying "Ah, the union's come." Making a chant of it.

"The union truck is here."

"The relief's come."

At the edge of the marsh, as near as it could come, there was the motor truck, piled with supplies, that made the round of barracks and strike villages.

This time it brought flour, a dozen white sacks for this place.

The men and women and the children clustered about it, some talking quietly; but the quiet talk broke to merriment. They felt the spring, the promise of food: it was a kind of holiday that day. It was like a payday when the men were in the pits, but more joyous, more relieved than that. The mine families pressed near the truck, laughing and shouting with a deep, rich sound.

An old woman, her thin hair knotted on her head, her black skirt billowing behind her, her eyes glittering with greed and her mouth shamelessly watering, rushed across the planks. The violence of her movement sent up little spurts of water and mud at every step: she was agile as a goat.

"What have they brought?" she cried, still running, not yet near enough to see. "What have the union brought this time?" Her voice was shrill.

"Flour, mother. Get your oven warm."

"And soap? Have the union brought us soap this time?"

A ripple of amusement passed over the crowd.

"No, mother. No soap this time again. No soap. Only flour."

"Aie, aie, again no soap. How, then, shall we keep clean? The filthy beasts. What are we, pigs, to have no soap?"

"Use sand, Mrs. Tovar," a young miner said gravely.

The crowd roared merrily.

"Ha, that is good. Use sand, he says. She rather would have soap than bread."

The old lady, offended, walked to the truck and poked her fingers into the bags of flour, testing them as if each were, indeed, a fresh baked loaf of baker's bread, muttering softly to herself in Polish speech; and the youth, pleased with himself, looked about for further success. He slapped another young man with his palm

in play. They boxed for a moment, burlesquing a fight: their comrades laughed and cheered. Then a hard blow was struck. The man who got it was angry.

"God damn you," he cried, "you hit me hard."

But others divided them, made peace. They put their arms about each other, shouting with laughter. They were like drunk: it was a holiday.

"I didn't mean to hit you, Joe."

"Oh, that's all right. God damn it, kid, you did swat me hard, though."

A playful youth slipped up behind his sweetheart and pinched her beneath her loose cotton dress. She screamed, and cried out at him, and he, laughing, dodged away. She laughed as well and made a game of it, running with mock-anger after him for vengeance. The others played, men holding the young man till she was close; then, pretending his strength was too much for them, releasing him in time. He dodged among the group, the girl after him. The man on the truck looked up and swore. The noise, he said, had made him lose the count and he had other places to go yet this afternoon, plenty more of them. Quiet, he would have for christ's sake, please.

That did not stop the game. Only made it more silent. The youth let his girl come up with him and caught her in his arms, as if to protect himself against her fists. She struggled briefly, then quieted. Struggle became an embrace: she standing like a young married woman who had the right, not even pretending shame for appearance sake.

The old lady, still resentful, cried: "There's more babies born into this town now we're on strike than ever was before. Yes, and less to feed 'em with. Yes, and less of them have names."

The young man kissed his sweetheart and released her.

"Well, now, Mrs. Tovar, I can explain that to you, too. You see we have more time for our sweethearts now and wives, since we don't have to work. We have more time to attend to you women now. But the priests won't marry us for nothing, and we can't buy marriage licenses for our union cards."

The men laughed and slapped each other's backs and women giggled, modestly aware. The children tugged at their mother's skirts. They laughed too, but they wanted to know why. And above all the old lady could be heard, shouting indignantly.

"Shame on you, Walter Stryak. Shame on you, young man. And don't you 'mother' me. It's a lucky thing for you I'm not your ma. I'd break your every bone.

"And don't you come around trying to tend to me or I'll bust you all in little bits and throw the pieces on the garbage pile."

But now the count was finished. The folk clustered to the truck again.

"What is it?" they asked. "What has the union sent?"

And others answered: "Flour."

"Flour."

That means bread to bake.

They were very important and vociferous. Even before the stuff was allotted they rushed the children to the corner of the yard, where there was a great pile of coal taken by the men from streams and the surface of the hill, left lying in the open for the use of all. They were glad to be baking bread. It was nice too when bakers' bread was sent: they liked the whiteness of the stuff. But the flour meant energy, importance, meant something to do. And they were glad of it. Back and forth the women and the children ran, to the houses after pans and bags. The ovens must be heated: there was much to do. The women quarrelled over their place smacking the youngsters. But withal they were goodnatured. Much might happen even at a picnic or a party.

They were still a group, chattering and quarreling, but the mud and the narrow walk were forming them into a line, orderly despite itself. Division was already proceeding: the women moved forward a step at a time, climbing the ladder with their receptacles

and crawling carefully down again, each followed to the baking by her own children.

The old lady, Mrs. Tovar, had her turn.

"Use sand, mother," Walter Stryzak murmured softly, as if to himself. And laughed aloud to see her flame and flounce her long black skirts at him. He was filling his pipe, collecting each grain of tobacco that fell on his clothes, trimming the bowl carefully. He was not very neat, but in these times he must save. He found a broken match in his shirt pocket, lighted the pipe, black and ragged at the top, and moved off on the narrow planking to the barracks.

Another young man walked towards him on the planks. They knew each other, but they did not speak until they almost touched.

Then Walter said, "Hi, hi, there." And the other answered, "Hi, Walter, how are you?"

They clasped hands and their hands did not relax. The gesture became a contest of strength, each gripping the other, high, toward the wrist with all his force; each body rocking with the effort to dislodge the other and still remain upright. The strain relaxed at last and they disengaged their hands, stood smiling, almost laughing aloud.

"And only last week it was snowing. Look at it now."

"Yet, it is spring now, sure enough. Even the scabs know that." The scabs. And how was that?

"Didn't you hear about what happened at Maryville?"

No Walter Stryzak had not. He would like to though.

"Well, you know they are very fine up there. They have solidarity there all right. When the strike came every man went out. And they did not go back. No, all winter not a one went back. And they could not keep scabs there either. The boys would argue with the scabs and the scabs would not go down. With some they argued so hard they broke their heads for them. So they did not go down. They thought it was much nicer if they would leave town. Even after the injunction the Maryville boys still argued. They waited until night and then they argued with the scabs. They talked so good no one would go back to the mines. And as fast as new men came in, the boys would pull them out. Until finally they put barbed wire around the shacks and went to Chicago for some tough men, so scabs they have. They eat, they drink, but not much coal do they mine. But they kept the pits open and the boys could not argue with them, so the company was satisfied I guess. But last week there was an explosion. A fellow lit a match below. They did not even have to dig him out. But the next morning the scabs would not go down.

"The tough Chicago fellows got pretty tired, I guess, of staying in the barbed wire and going down in the pits and maybe blowing up. They went on strike.

"But wait. I will tell you what a strike. They had a great fight among themselves. Some coal and irons went in and they got beat up too. They would have liked to shoot them all I guess. They could not do that, though. So the scabs sent out their demands. They wanted a good drunk and they were tired of being bachelors. And the company had to give in to them.

"So that was a problem for Wilson. You know him, the superintendent at Maryville, a teacher in the Baptist Sunday school and a good man, *very* good. But there was nothing for him to do. He took two big automobiles and went over to Maggie Gill's place."

"And he is in the Baptist Sunday school."

"Yes, and when he got there, ashamed to show himself, Maggie came to the door. A big fat woman, you know her. 'And what do you want in my crib house, Mr. Wilson?' she hollers so you can hear her a quarter mile away. He begs her to be quiet and whispers in her ear. But quiet she would not be. And she would not let him go inside: he must stand at the door. A hundred people must have gathered there, watching that long, skinny, horsefaced guy.

He whispered at her again.

"What, all my girls you want," she yells. "That's a lot of women for a quiet man like you." He goes as red as a new house.

"No, no," he says very quiet and whispers to her again.

"Oh (it's for the scabs. Can't they get it in Chicago?"

"So there they stand and all the people out in front laughing and passing remarks and the girls crowding behind her listening. Finally she turns to them and says: 'Mr. Wilson here wants you to go to his scabs. If any of you girls want to go it's O K with

me all right. But don't think you can come back here again. Not to my house you can't."

"Then he speaks up. 'Don't you mind her,' he say, 'there's plenty money in the company yet to pay you for your work.'"

"One of the women outside hollers, 'Yes, enough to get whores for the scabs, but not enough to pay wages to us that brings up the coal.'

"He turns around and says something to the crowd. But no one could hear a word. Everyone just hollers the same thing, over and over again, until the poor guy is almost crying."

"Did anybody go, any of the girls?"

"That's what I'm coming to. I haven't finished yet. That is the really funny part. There was one girl said she'd go and put on her hat and coat and Maggie let her go. When she got outside the door Maggie landed her a kick in the seat and grabbed Wilson by the arm. 'That girl ain't coming back inside my house,' she says. 'Here's her clothes. She's yours.' She made him wait while she piled his arms up with the girl's stuff. Did everybody laugh.

"And when they drove off Maggie turned to the girls—she's so big she just can turn around in that doorway—and says: 'I don't never want to catch any of you speaking to that girl again. She's just a common tart.'"

Then did the two men laugh. They howled, they roared.—So one of Maggie's ladies was a tart and she never found it out. They gripped each other by the shoulder, rocked with merriment. For laughter, they had no strength to resume their game, to test their strength, one against the other.

"Did you get that? Maggie had that girl in her house for nearly five years and didn't know she was a tart till the day she went off to the mine with Mr. Wilson."

"Ah, those scabs. They'll tear her in pieces. One girl to all of them. Poor girl."

They stood so, laughing at the enormous joke. Their laughter bound them together, that and the warm spring air, the sense of victory and life they had from it. They loved the moment, sought to prolong it. When merriment died down they prodded it—Ah, and at that moment, not before, Maggie found she had a tart in her house. But finally it ended. They could do no more. Spontaneity was dead. Again they gripped each other's hands.

"Goodbye, Walter."

"So long, Mike Tovar. Come this way again."

Embarrassed by warmth they let their handclasp separate. Walter Stryzak walked slowly again along the narrow planking laid over the marsh to connect the storeroom with the apartments. "But the woman was right," he thought, "for *that* there is money, but not to live on." He felt a sad restlessness. He was conscious that the strike was on and he had work to do, and of the bitter winter season that still rested in spring.

Winter lasted that year until July, it seemed; and then there was only the breathless legend of summer, all its pleasure gone without the miners even tasting it.

A pestilence swept through the villages. The people went out into the wet. They came back chilled and shaking with fever. And nothing was any good; none of the home remedies, neither poultices nor herb-tea nor hot drinks nor the charms that old Mrs. McNeille made to wear about the neck or be carried in the men's pockets. A little whiskey sometimes helped, but it was rare. The sick lay abed, heaped with whatever clothes they had and shivering in the warm, wet air as if they were naked in the snow.

In the barracks only Joe Stryzak retained an unbroken steadfastness. His eyes burned with a constant wrath. He walked with long angry steps, not caring into what muck his feet fell. His hands were active as he talked and he would stand no contradiction. Whoever interfered with him he fell on, crying them down, shaming them for ignorance or cowardice. He had always been a violent man; his great size and his strength put him above the others. Drunk or sober none could whip him; none could work alongside him and follow him. His strength and intelligence had made him valuable: for a miner's earnings his were apt to be high. But if he saw that others were urged to emulate him, rebuked because they could not do as well as he, then he became surly, shirking to bring his output to that of the lowest man. Conscious of his value, he could be short with the mine boss, even to the superintendent. In his younger days he had got himself into scrapes from which even his miner's skill could not extract him. He always vot-

ed "aye" for strike. When he was drunk he would work into a carefully planned argument with someone above him in the hierarchy of the pits, fanning his anger until he could no longer contain it, finding release for it with his fists. He had been driven from mine to mine, but never blacklisted, or not for long; always coming out on whatever top there was for a pitman who, in the very nature of his being, must crawl along some bottom.

During the war, when orders were big, he had been openly bitter over the agreement which the union had made and which kept the miners from wages as high as those in other industries.

"Wait," he'd say. "Just wait until this business is over and see if they remember what fools we were. See then if we do not have to go licking their bottoms again (or biting them, perhaps) to get enough to eat on like a man. See if they don't squeeze us to the last penny when they can again."

When John Mitchell died and the unions mourned for him, there was only one thing in his mind. He broke up his local memorial meeting in the midst of a eulogy by crying: "Tell me only this one thing. Why did John Mitchell die a millionaire? Ah, he milked you nicely while he lived and now you wet your mugs with crying for him."

He went every day to the Post Office, nearly three miles away, to receive his copy of the *Worker*, opening it brazenly before the ring of troopers who used the place to lounge. If anyone laughed at him, or if he thought they did, he glared, set his shoulders, and stared until the man withdrew. Once he was absent from the barracks for a week. He came back with bruised face, but unsubdued.

He formed a friendship with Mrs. McNeilly. She was very old. A hundred, some of the people said. She was not that, but she was old. She had been in the pits when all the miners were Irishmen and had seen many races pass.

"But they was all alike," she'd say. "All of them alike, Joe Strysak, and some like you."

She had been in the coal country during the Long Strike of 1875. Her own father had been among the thousand miners who had walked from pit to pit, dragging the strikebreakers out by will or force and marching onward, an increasing fury; until with stones and their own fists they had captured Malonoy City from the sheriff's men with guns; and held it, liberating the prisoners from the jails, swaggering in the streets and swearing to break the chains that held all workingmen, proud and victorious. But he had come home dead that day.

Then she herself had been a mine worker, laboring at the breakers with the boys who shamed her with rough jokes at her sex, leaving the home shack bravely in her pinafore and stopping at some lonely place before she reached the workplace to slip into her overalls. She had forgotten much; but she remembered much.

"I remember John Siney," she said, "fine and big like you are, Joe, with his great, black head and standing where I have seen you stand."

But she would always end by saying: "So it has always been with the miners, the Irish, the Hunkies and now the Poles. So it will always be. It is God's will."

And that he could not stand. He would snort and leave her. But always to return: always to hear her talk again. To drink it in and say: "Yes, so it has always been. Always the men have fought, —but from each fight something has been left."

Prosperity

*An overland limited
Chalks a streak of gold
Across the blackboard of night.
Sleepers groan under the impact of flying steel,
Life trembles in the wake of dust and wind.
Prosperity lounges in pullman coaches,
Eats roast turkey in dining cars, and schemes
Ways and means of robbing farmers
Out of next year's grain crops;*

*While American jobless
Ride the decks, the rods of the coaches
And nurse a great hunger with dreams
Of wheat cakes and coffee steaming
On the counter of a coffee-an' joint
Somewhere in Omaha, Denver, Colorado Springs.*

JIM WATERS

BLOODY MONDAY IN DEARBORN

For years the Ford plant has been held up to the world as an example of capitalism at its best. It was the "ideal" factory. True, it forbade trade unions, but its workers received high wages and came to work in their own cars. This was the Ford legend. It persisted despite the testimony of workers that Ford employees were the virtual slaves of the belt, victims of capitalist rationalization.

The crisis exploded the Ford myth. When the automobile industry collapsed, tens of thousands of Ford workers were thrown out of their jobs, and neither the benevolent despot of Detroit nor the "rugged individualist" at Washington would give jobs or bread to the unemployed. There are doles for the rich but none for the poor; there are "baby bonds" for shaky banks but no milk for starving working class babies.

Instead of bread the workers are handed bunk. One of the chief donors of this commodity has been Ford himself. At first he announced that he would not cut wages. After the applause for this noble act had died down, he cut wages more than any other automobile manufacturer. Then he discovered that there was no economic crisis; it was a mere "figment of the imagination." But more recently, finding that he could no longer conceal the "depression," he announced that he would risk his whole fortune to relieve the production crisis. He still announces that there is no unemployment in his plant, although in actual fact more than 100,000 Ford workers are unemployed.

Amidst Ford's lies the truth spoke out—with the voice of machine guns.

On March seventh about 5,000 jobless Ford workers, organized by the Unemployed Council of Detroit, marched to the Ford plant in an orderly and disciplined demonstration, to submit their demands to the Ford administration. While a committee was presenting a petition to the management, the police opened fire first with tear-gas and fire-hose, then with machine guns. Four workers were killed and fifty injured, many of them seriously. Among those murdered was Joe York, 19-year old district organizer of the Young Communist League.

The Ford campaign of terror did not end with the March seventh massacre. Themselves guilty of wanton murder, the police proceeded to arrest workers who participated in the demonstration. At this writing they are preparing to frameup militant workers on charges of riot and murder.

This is Ford's answer to his jobless employees moderate demands for work and unemployment relief.

Detroit's Bloody Monday marked the second anniversary, almost to a day, of the murderous attack by the New York police on those workers who participated in the March sixth unemployment demonstration. Since that time the capitalist class has steadily intensified its reign of terror. In Kentucky and Tennessee striking miners have been beaten, kidnapped and murdered. Intellectuals who have come down to investigate conditions have been jailed, slugged and fired upon. In February, Kentucky gunmen in the pay of coal operators (including Ford, Rockefeller, Morgan and Insull) murdered Harry Simms, a member of the Young Communist League active in the Pineville area. Now Ford shows that Michigan is not behind Kentucky in murdering militant workers.

The terror is accompanied by a falsification of the news. The movies of the March sixth demonstration in New York were suppressed. Now the press reports that newspapermen and photographers present at the Detroit massacre were ordered from the scene and the negatives of all the cameras that could be seized were confiscated.

All workers, all honest intellectuals must face these facts. The American capitalist class is now, as in all times of crisis, openly ruling by the machine gun. The American working class is fighting for its most elementary rights; it realizes that this fight is part of the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and its system of fraud, robbery and murder.



THE NEW MODEL—1932

Jacob Burck

PARIS COMMUNE

*In seventy-one we died in a week of blood
to tickle the boulevardiers and the silk top hats;
they wagered on us as we floated the Seine
from Maisons-Alfort to the shores of St. Cloud:
"How many federals do you bet on the tide?"*

*Our blood, the blood of the red avowal
has placed the red flag over the black earth,
will place the red flag over Lille and Marseilles,
from Finistere to Lorraine
(the red flag flies in St. Denis.)
over the Pantheon and the Chamber of Deputies.
You will rename your thoroughfares
for the brave men of the barricades,
you will remember the men of the Faubourgs
and the Place de la Bastille.
For every silk hat of arrogance,
for each parasol that gouged the eye,
for every slander and every corpse
and the whimsical estimate, 'heroic picnic,'
there will be*

War on the palaces,
Peace in the cottages,

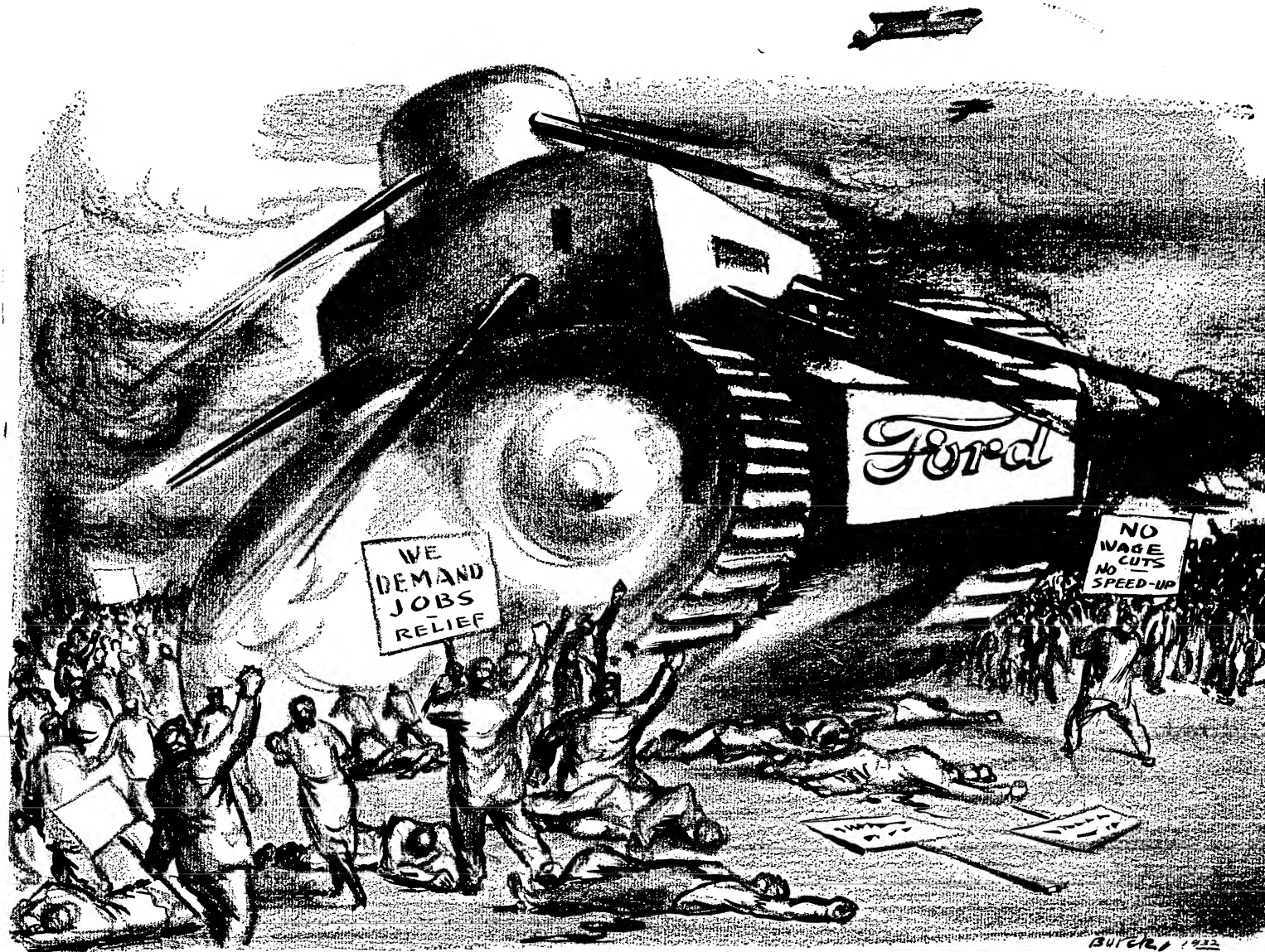
Death to poverty and idleness!
This is the goal of our excess.

*Only a small outpost skirmish, comrades,
the main affair is ahead of us, said Bebel in '71,
at the close of the seventy days,
the seventy red days of seventy-one.*

*The main affair has won its first siege,
over one-sixth of the world—
the skirmish was lost but the war is won!
Greetings, Communard, dictator of '71,
Seventeen greets you,
October greets March!
There is no blind spot
in the memory of the proletariat:*

*This is our heritage, our consanguinity,
the one blood of the one class
the world has long awaited
to catapult its law against disaster,
to load the guns against the master rogues,
to load the guns against the loaded dice,
the stratagems of delusion,
the virtuositities of greed.
Ours is the blood of the one assurance:
All Power to the Soviets!*

HARRY ALAN POTAMKIN



EDWIN SEAVER

LITERATURE AT THE CROSSROADS

The story is told of Tolstoy that he once received a visit from the editor of an advance guard magazine who was soliciting a contribution from his pen. For the better part of an hour Tolstoy listened in silence while his visitor dilated on his plans for the magazine and attempted to impress the old man with his thorough familiarity with the very latest styles in European prose and poetry. Finally the editor told Tolstoy that he would be grateful for a contribution for the October and March issues, and mopping his brow—for by this time he must have become excruciatingly aware of his host's penetrating silence—announced that he had nothing further to say. Tolstoy's reply was simple and characteristic.

"Indefinite," he said in anything but an indefinite manner. And going to the door he added: "I can understand why a man writes when he thinks he has something to say, but why a man would write only in October or in March, that I shall never be able to understand. Goodbye."

With somewhat the same irritation, although hardly for the same good reason, the American writer of integrity is apt to respond to the concept "revolutionary writer." I understand what a revolutionist is, he will say, and I think I understand what a writer is, but precisely what a revolutionary writer is, that I do not understand.

To the avowed revolutionary writer this attitude is just so much evasion, and no doubt it is often that, although it may just as well be plain ordinary ignorance. But call it evasion, call it ignorance, call it what you will, the fact remains that for the great majority of American writers this is the attitude they still adhere to. If we are to be at all realistic we must admit that not only are most American writers not revolutionary writers, but they do not even begin to know what the term means. Nor do they understand what the term "bourgeois writers" means. We are just writers, they will tell you with some asperity—with the more asperity the more they are troubled in their own consciences—and we do not wish to be bothered with all this Marxian jargon. Very well, let us begin by taking things as we find them, not as we think they ought to be. It is useless for two people to engage in controversy when they are talking about entirely different things. It is necessary to begin with some common understanding.

I do not doubt that the problems of the revolutionary writer in America today are many and grave, and as the years go on, and at the present catastrophic rate of the disintegration of capitalist civilization, they are bound to increase in their gravity and demand the utmost heroism of those who remain loyal. But the very fact that one is already a revolutionary writer means that he has already taken many of the hurdles that confront the majority of American writers today. It presupposes a quite different set of problems than that which confronts those writers.

The revolutionary writer has his clearly defined line of action from which he cannot depart without risking criticism for left or right deviation. This line of action recognizes no regional or national boundaries; its technique is international and differs only in the method of application to the specific problems that arise from specific situations. It applies the materialistic dialectic to all problems. It seeks, in a word, to carry out the minimum obligations agreed upon by the International Union of Revolutionary Writers at the Kharkov conference of 1930. Let us recall what this minimum agreement consists of:

"The International Union of Revolutionary Writers resting on their minimum program as formulated at the first Conference of Revolutionary Writers in November, 1927 (1. The struggle against imperialist wars. 2. The struggle against fascism and the white terror) must extend this program in accordance with the present situation. Members of all sections are obliged to contribute actively to the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in their respective countries, to wage war not only against fascism but also against social fascism, to support the struggle of the oppressed colonial peoples with all the means at their disposal, to struggle in the most active way for the defence of the U. S. S. R."

This then is what it means to be a revolutionary writer in the opinion of the only organization of revolutionary writers at pres-

ent in existence. Now suppose you confront the average American writer with this resolution of the Kharkov conference, of which the chances are that he has never even heard. All right, he will say, fine, O. K. BUT, what has all this got to do with Dionysius, as Aristophanes would say. What you have outlined are the problems that confront revolutionists today, but what has that got to do with the problems that confront me as a story teller, as a novelist, as a dramatist, a poet, a literary critic? You're talking politics, not art. And there we are right back to where we started. It is like the balky horse who refuses to see the necessity of taking the hurdle when he comes to it, no matter how many times he is faced with the issue.

But right here we have, I think, the crucial point of departure for the American writer. It is right here that we have the explanation not only why there are so few revolutionary writers in America—for that is easily understandable—but why so much of the literary output of American writers is lacking in maturity, in purpose, in direction, why for the most part it makes no more impression on our national life than snow in April, why so much of our creative literature is either the literature of empty violence or lyric escape, and so much of our critical literature is conspicuous chiefly for its absence. It is a real split in the consciousness of the American writer, a split between what he conceives to be his function as a social being and his function as a writer. And it is a split which he will have to bridge if he is to go ahead at all, for the alternative is decay and death.

Our revolutionary writers do themselves something less than justice, I think, when they call such writers—and as I say they number among them the great majority of American men of letters—bourgeois writers. From a strictly ideological point of view they are, of course, precisely that. But the point is they are not consciously so. The point is that once their eyes are opened and they begin to question the age they are living in, they are just as likely, they are more likely to become ardent fellow travellers, if not revolutionary writers than they are bourgeois writers. We have seen exactly this happen to a number of American authors within the past few years, and I am confident we shall see much more in years to come. It takes time. For American authors it is first of all necessary that they undergo a revolution within themselves before they can face adequately the world revolution. It is necessary that they uproot a tradition that is already bred in the bone.

Unlike most of their European colleagues, most American writers have never learned to think politically, to think economically. They have never taken seriously their right to vote, and though they have never actually called the major political parties two sides of the same capitalist coin, they have taken the situation pretty much as a joke for all that. Washington is further away for them and much more meaningless than the Polo grounds. American political life has always been pretty much of a circus to them, a circus withal grown exceedingly stupid and tedious, and they have come to consider literature as something divorced from all that sort of thing.

In the same way they have come to consider literature as something divorced from Wall Street, divorced from the proletariat, divorced from the farmers, divorced from everything in short that partakes at all of an ideological nature.

It is no wonder that they fight shy of the term revolutionary writer, with all its political, economic and class implications. Literature for art's sake or for money's sake, and each with its own special brand of problems—this has been the beginning and end of the concern of most American writers. On the one hand there was a contempt for the Joneses as being unable to understand real art, and on the other hand a desire to live with the best of the Joneses by giving them what the writers thought the Joneses thought they wanted.

But within the last few years something vital has happened. American writers of integrity have begun to find themselves in a blind alley. They have begun to find themselves out of touch not only with the dominant ideas of their age but with any genuine ideas at all, with the consequent impoverishment of their work. And as they have become more and more desperately aware of this,



SWEAT SHOP—1932

William Gropper

they have begun to question themselves, to try to discover what is wrong with them.

This was the first step. Or perhaps it was the second. Perhaps the first step was their growing awareness that something was rotten in Denmark indeed if they could be living in the richest country in the world and at the same time have to listen to the "best minds" debating whether it was nobler for the people to starve by public dole or by private charity. To live in a world where there was too much wheat and not enough bread to go round, too much cotton and not enough clothes, too many dwellings and not enough shelter, a world where banks were bursting with money and millions were walking the streets jobless, penniless, hopeless—all this was enough to make any man wonder whether he was standing on his feet or on his head. It was enough to make any man begin to question. Perhaps there might even be some connection between the blind acceptance of this topsy-turvy world as the best of all possible worlds and the drought that was drying up the springs of inspiration. It was necessary, in short, to have this growing self-consciousness on the part of American authors before there could be any sense of class consciousness. It was necessary for the American writer to undergo a revolution within himself before he could be ready to understand what is meant by the term revolutionary writer.

This revolution has already begun. But it has only begun. It cannot, it must not be forced, if it is to have any enduring value. It must work its way from within, not be mere lip service to a few ideas culled from a few books. It must arise from actual experience, so that the ideas, as Plechanov said, enter one's flesh and blood.

Thus within the last few years we have seen writers who began with a purely aesthetic preoccupation with their work, turn to liberalism as a way out, and some, finding liberalism not enough, have turned still further to the left, giving up all hope of reform

of the capitalist civilization they have inherited, and boldly coming out for a new deal altogether.

It is these individuals, few as they are and scattered, who are the real hope of any genuine mass movement of American revolutionary writers. The American writer understands them, for his cycle of experience is identical with theirs, and for every one of them who breaks away from his attitude of isolation as a social being and takes his stand against the monstrous stupidity of capitalism and the bourgeoisie, there are many more ready to follow.

I am not, I think, being unduly optimistic. The liberal attitude, to which many of our writers adhere today, is not a way ahead; it is a crossroads from which point it is possible to turn either to the right or to the left, and there can be no doubt that many of our writers will turn to the right as the class struggle grows more intense. But some will just as surely turn to the left.

In this connection I should like to conclude by quoting once more from Plechanov.

"Among the bourgeois ideologists going over to the side of the proletariat we see very few artists (and for the word 'artists' we may substitute 'writers'). This is probably due to the fact that the height of theoretical understanding can be reached only by those who think, whereas the contemporary artists, in contradiction to the great masters of the Renaissance, for instance, think exceedingly little. At all events it may be confidently stated that any artist of considerable talent will increase his power to a very high degree if he will become imbued with the great emancipatory ideas of our time. It is necessary that those ideas should enter his flesh and blood, that he should express them precisely as an artist. It is also necessary that he should be able properly to assess the art modernism of the contemporary ideologists of the bourgeoisie. The ruling class is now in such a state that to go forward means for it to go downward. This sad fate of the bourgeoisie is shared by all its ideological exponents. The foremost among them are precisely those who have sunk lower than all their predecessors."



PHYLLIS GRAVES

TIMES ARE HARD

Tony Sormenti lives two houses away from me. He is one of the 60,000 jobless workers in New York receiving "work relief." He works three days a week on city construction and repair jobs. For this he receives \$16.50 from the city relief bureau. He is envied by his less fortunate neighbors who have also applied for relief but have been refused jobs because the relief funds of the city are almost exhausted.

Tony is a chauffeur by trade. He lost his job a year and a half ago. He tried dozens of employment agencies but could find no work. When his small savings were exhausted he was compelled to apply to the city relief bureau. He was among the first applicants and so got a job. The wage which Tony gets from the bureau is not enough to provide his wife and six children with even the barest necessities of life. The diet of the family consists almost exclusively of bread, potatoes, macaroni and a few cheap vegetables. Mrs. Sormenti seldom buys meat. It costs too much even at the present low prices. Every day she buys one quart of milk and mixes it with an equal amount of water. This has to suffice for six children ranging from two to eleven years in age.

The other day she said to me: "The children cry for more milk and I can't bear to hear them cry. Sometimes I think I'll go crazy sitting here and listening to them. I used to go outside and take the three young ones for a walk, while the others were at school, but I can't do that any more. The children don't have any warm clothes. My nine year old boy Johnny, he's very smart. He understands everything. Yesterday he said to me, 'Ma, wouldn't it be better to die than to live? Wouldn't it be better to take gas?'"

But Mrs. Sormenti cannot take gas even if she wanted to. She has not been able to pay her gas bills for several months, and the gas company has shut off her supply. They have shut off the electric lights, too. The three older children formerly went to a parochial school because their parents were devout Catholics. But hunger is beginning to shake Mrs. Sormenti's faith in the church. In the city schools hungry children are sometimes fed milk and bread; red children are sometimes given shoes and clothing through the contributions of teachers. But such funds deducted from teachers salaries do not exist in the catholic schools.

"I went to the priest and told him we were hungry," Mrs. Sormenti said. "He listened to me and all he said was, 'I wish you luck my child, god bless you.' That's all you can get out of them. The head of the parish is going to Palm Beach next week and the parish is putting up a fine building. But they don't have any money to feed the hungry."

Across the street from the Sormentis lives another unemployed worker who has been fortunate enough to get a part time job from the work relief bureau. He is a Serb named Pete Kamenevitch. Pete is fifty years old, stocky, heavily muscled from hard work in coke plants since his early youth. He is proud of his skill. He has been out of work over a year. "I wasn't dismissed," he told me, "I left myself. The company wanted to save a million dollars in my plant. They brought in an efficiency expert to cut down expenses. He dismissed two men working at my oven, and expected me and another worker to do the work that four of us had done before. I'm a good worker, worked in coke plants all my life. The company brought me from Youngstown because I knew my job. But I couldn't stand the new pace. I had to quit."

Pete has three children. One of them, a boy of twenty, worked in the same coke plant with his father. He was dismissed when the company introduced stringent "economy" measures. The family has **no means of support except** the three days' emergency relief work which Pete obtained from the City bureau. His family is heavily in debt and has not paid its rent, gas and electric bills for many months.

"We're better off than many families in our neighborhood," Pete told me. "The family next door has two little children and can't get any relief from the city because they applied too late. They have no milk for the babies. We give them the little food we can spare."

New York has great newspapers with plenty of money and large staffs of reporters. These newspapers print stories about athletes, crooners, movie stars, society debutantes, divorcees; but they have no room to describe how a million unemployed workers and their families live. But sometimes the truth comes out. The growing desperation of New York's unemployed is revealed in a report drawn up by the city's Emergency Work and Relief Bureau which investigated 6,304 applications for relief. The report shows that food was lacking in 5,122 homes, or 81 percent of the total number of homes investigated. Most of the families were in debt from fifty to five hundred dollars. The average family debt was \$224. About 74 percent of the families have been compelled to borrow from friends and relatives. Some families get their sole support from irregular loans from friends and neighbors. Over 5,500 families, or 88 percent of the families investigated, were in arrears for rent. In nearly all mortgage cases foreclosures were imminent. About 4,000 families or 63 percent of the total were heavily in arrears on their life insurance payments. Half of those having insurance had borrowed on their policies or had sold them at a heavy loss. More than 25 percent of the families had savings accounts in the banks before the depression, but these small reserves were now completely exhausted. Nearly 2400 families lacked winter clothing. The city investigators found that in many of the families children could not attend school for lack of clothing. Adults and children had to use paper or pasteboard in shoes to reinforce soles that could not be repaired. Fuel was urgently needed in 25 percent of the homes. Scrapwood collected from the streets was the only means which many families had of heating their homes. In nearly 40 percent of the families there was great discouragement and bitterness because homes are being broken up by a capitalist crisis which makes it impossible for parents to take care of their children. In more than 1500 homes furniture had been pawned or sold to buy food. None of the families visited were known to any "welfare" society, but about 50 percent were trying to live on small food allotments obtained irregularly from emergency relief offices.

Anyone who visits the homes of families even receiving work relief can see the same conditions of misery, hunger and degradation. But it must be remembered that only 60,000 out of more than 1,000,000 unemployed workers in New York city have obtained jobs through the city. Perhaps another 100,000 receive food tickets enabling them to buy a few dollars' worth of food a week. These tickets are good only for chain stores. Hundreds of thousands of unemployed workers and their families receive no relief whatever and must depend on friends, relatives and the few breadlines which conspicuously advertise their sponsors. City relief offices are so swamped that even the registration of applicants has been suspended. The Emergency Work Bureau has announced that as a result of insufficient funds more than 57,000 applicants "who need work desperately" have already been refused work relief.

These conditions are, of course, not confined to New York. Recently the *Philadelphia Record* published the following letter from a jobless war veteran:

"I want to let you know about the city garbage dumps. I am one of the many who eat from the dumps. We are compelled to do so to keep from starving. Children and adults, we live in packing boxes on the dumps to keep ourselves warm. There are as many as three hundred to five hundred men, women and children at the city dump every day to look through the garbage to get something to eat. I am a world war veteran and have been gassed and am sick. It is a frightful shame that a rich country like this should treat people so. I suppose that when there is another war they will call on the garbage eaters to fight for them."

Another war is on the way, and it is very likely that the "garbage eaters" will learn to fight their real enemies this time.



ANKUO—NEW LAND OF PEACE

Jacob Burck



ANKUO—NEW LAND OF PEACE

Jacob Burck

MANUEL GOMEZ

FROZEN ASSETS

"The world is suffering more from frozen confidence than from frozen assets," said President Hoover blandly at the conclusion of one of those enigmatically reported conferences with M. Laval. Workers whose concern was rather with the prospect of frozen toes and fingers than with frozen assets, which they did not have, might have marveled at the entire formulation of the question. Not so the capitalists. To them there was nothing unreal about this approach to the problems of the economic crisis, which they prefer to speak of as the "depression."

Frozen assets are securities and other properties that cannot be "moved" at profit; a huge amount of them is standing as security for loans, but the value of the security has declined so much that it no longer affords protection against default. As a result loans have to be carried indefinitely to avoid tremendous losses.

It is not unnatural for President Hoover to emphasize confidence. He maintained consistently that there is not enough unemployment to require aid from the federal government, and with wages being slashed throughout the country, he has expressed pride in "the co-operation of American employers in maintaining the high level of wages." This "high level of wages" has never existed. The profits of American corporations increased by leaps and bounds between 1920 and 1927 but the figures of the National Industrial Conference Board show that the average hourly earnings of workers in manufacturing industries were 61 cents in 1920 and 57 cents in 1927. Figures for agriculture and mining industries would be even less favorable. Like American bourgeois leaders in general, Hoover refused until 1931—the third year of the crisis—to recognize publicly that there was any real crisis at all.

In June of last year came the announcement of the moratorium for Germany, issued partly to preserve loans to Germany but principally to head off a German revolution. This was the most dramatic of a series of international events, beginning with sharpened social conflicts in Germany and the failure of the Kreditanstalt bank in Austria, and culminating in the abandonment of the gold standard by Great Britain. Meantime, conditions in this country were going from bad to worse. It was no longer possible to deny the existence of a world-wide crisis. Hoover's lips uttered the awful word "depression."

Bankers' conferences were held at the White House. There was a long final conference, with leading Republicans and Democrats both present. On October sixth the word began to circulate in Wall Street that Hoover would have an important announcement to make—something which, it was insisted, would have a more sustained "healthy" effect than the announcement that had occasioned the sharp "moratorium rally" on the stock market in June. The following day the president made his announcement. Its significance had not been over-stressed, though its objectives had been somewhat misconstrued.

Hoover put forward a six-point plan for relieving the situation. It contained no reference to the working class. Its central proposal was that bankers throughout the country form themselves into a National Credit Corporation to lend funds to weakened banks on security of "admittedly slow" (frozen) assets that no one else would take. It was explained that the assets were really sound and only the temporary low level of prices was at fault.

Alas, the bankers were not disposed to take over each other's frozen assets for cash even in an emergency. To date (March 1, 1932) only \$144,000,000 of the \$450,000,000 subscribed capital of the National Credit Corporation has been loaned out, though the body has been deluged with applications for loans. The program of bankers' aid to bankers was a flat failure.

Undaunted, Hoover and the other friends of frozen assets came forward with a new organization, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which was formed in January. It was to lend money on frozen assets not only to banks but to all sorts of financial institutions as well as railroad and other corporations. The United States government—which had pleaded an unbalanced budget as one of the excuses against unemployment relief and public works programs—subscribed the entire \$500,000,000 capital funds for this purpose. It also guaranteed principal and interest payments on \$1,500,000,000 more which the Reconstruction Finance Corpora-

tion was to raise by selling its own bonds to the "public."

It was expected that \$2,000,000,000 would be enough. Experience has indicated by now that it is nothing like enough. Moreover, thus far the Reconstruction Finance Corporation has been able to secure no funds except those handed over to it by the government.

Eventually it became necessary to reinforce the Reconstruction Finance Corporation with the provisions of the Glass-Steagall Act which empowers the Federal Reserve system itself to make loans to banks on frozen assets to the full limit of its available resources—and to increase its resources by printing more currency.

The currency provision of the Glass-Steagall Act permits the issuance of federal reserve notes (currency) backed to the extent of 60 percent by nothing more substantial than United States government bonds. Since bank notes are in effect a promise to pay, and government bonds are a promise to pay, this means simply backing a promise to pay by a promise to pay.

The Reconstruction Finance Corporation, reinforced by the provisions of the Glass-Steagall Act, occupies the central position in the Hoover program. However, its full implications can be appreciated only in connection with a number of supplementary measures that have emanated in rapid succession from Washington and related centers, mostly since last October. Part of Hoover's original six-point plan was deferred until it was felt that it could be deferred no longer. Some of the points were amended. New ones were added. There would be no purpose in outlining here all of the various supplementary measures that have been adopted, from the formation of the Railroad Credit Corporation to the initiation of the Anti-Hoarding Campaign and the latest regulations to make short selling difficult on the New York Stock Exchange. The composite reveals a clear-cut pattern: the essentials of which are as follows:

As regards banks: (1) To underwrite the extension of huge credits to banks on frozen collateral of doubtful worth, (2) to disregard market valuations in bank examiners' appraisal of bank assets; (3) to coax the remaining hoarded funds of workers, farmers and petty businessmen back into these same insolvent banks. *As regards securities:* (1) To organize careful liquidation of assets of closed banks under government auspices, with a view "to prevent the promiscuous dumping of securities," as Controller of the Currency Pole puts it; (2) to support security prices by reduced Federal Reserve rediscount and bill buying rates; (3) to encourage effort to rig the stock market into inflation of security values. *As regards commerce and industry:* (1) to lend government and Federal Reserve money to railroads that are unable to meet maturity payments on their bonds; (2) to assist railroads that cannot meet their fixed charges; (3) to provide similar doles for certain other groups of corporations; (4) to bolster up real estate prices through the so-called Home Loan Banks and other instrumentalities. *As regards agriculture:* to subscribe \$125,000,000 government funds to swell the capital of the Federal Land Banks, (one-fifth of this amount is to be used for extensions of farmers' mortgages; the remainder goes to insure interest to coupon clippers).

Only for purposes of convenience is it permissible to speak of the foregoing program as the Hoover Program. As already indicated, it is the result of numerous bankers' conferences and represents the most intimate co-operation between governmental and private financial organizations. Those measures that required direct government action have been adopted with the support of Republicans and Democrats alike. It is a program of American capitalism.

Does this program point the way to a solution of the economic crisis? Obviously not. There is no mystery about the crisis: it is due to the fact that the vast majority of the population cannot, because of insufficient purchasing power, buy the accumulated consumption goods it has produced while the capitalists, who have purchasing power, do not suffer from any shortage of consumption goods. On the other hand, they will not put their money into production goods (factories, etc.) because to do so at a time when the products of industry are already piled high on the market

would be unprofitable. Any plan that does not recognize this elemental fact is not even a serious approach to the problem. Do the capitalists want to solve the problem? Of course they do. The difficulty is that they want to solve it only on the basis of continued profits. And this cannot be accomplished so easily.

It is of interest to examine just what the Hoover program is meant to accomplish, and what it is risking in the accomplishment. There were 2,290 bank failures last year, involving total deposits of more than \$1,750,000,000. The loans to banks are intended to help stem the tide of bankruptcies.

As for the railroads, some of the most important railroad systems of the country have bond issues maturing in 1932 and 1933 which have caused deep concern—among them the Baltimore & Ohio, the Erie, the Missouri Pacific, the Nickel Plate, and the Great Northern. Other important roads, like the New York Central, have large bank loans outstanding which they are unable to refund. The list of railroads whose income does not cover their fixed charges on the basis of present swollen capital obligations is too long to reproduce here. The truth is that railroads such as the Frisco, the Rock Island, the Illinois Central, the Chicago & Northwestern, and the Missouri Pacific are close to receivership. Loans to these roads are an endeavor to bolster up a structure that is tottering.

Total business failures of all kinds in the United States last year numbered 26,381, and the liabilities aggregated \$2,280,000,000. The face value of bonds reported as being in default at the present time approximates \$2,000,000,000. Here is no question of organizing recovery from the depression but of staving off present collapse of the whole structure of American business claims on the basis of the existing swollen capitalizations. Seantor Glass, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, stated that "banking officials had revealed a situation, if not menacing, at least distinctly disturbing", which caused his committee to agree to proposals which they did not favor "for fear of being placed in an attitude of obstinacy in the face of these more or less alarming representations."

But capitalism cannot lift itself up by its bootstraps. The burden must be placed somewhere, and it is placed upon the masses. It is true that the United States government is advancing funds but the government also is increasing taxes heavily, which will add to the retail prices of all sorts of necessary commodities from clothing to cigarettes. For the workers such taxation will be tantamount to a further reduction in the wages that have already been cut to the bone. It will also take a heavy toll from farmers and will mean the ruin of many petty shopkeepers.

Even with the new taxes there will be a deficit of at least \$2250,000,000 in the 1932 federal budget. The government will have to sell large quantities of United States bonds to make up the difference. In the last analysis the funds to carry these bonds will be advanced largely by the Federal Reserve System. Until the passage of the Glass-Steagall Act there was no legal way in which the Federal Reserve could provide currency for such purposes due to hoarding, which has obliged it to spread its gold

backing over a larger and larger amount of paper currency, until the danger point had been reached. The Glass-Steagall Act will permit the Federal Reserve to expand the currency circulation by nearly \$3,500,000,000 without any addition to the gold coverage. That it is likely to avail itself of this possibility seems evident enough, since in no other way can the requisite amount of United States government bonds be sold, or the other financial exigencies of the Hoover Plan be met. This of course means inflation. Inflation in turn means that workers' wages will buy less.

Thus maintenance of fictitious security values and of overcapitalizations is to be charged against the standard of living of the masses.

From the standpoint of ultimate consequences, the futility of attempting to hold up capital values by these strong-arm methods seems evident. To expect that the inflated security and property values could be held up for any length of time presupposes that profits will suddenly become large enough to justify them. Such profits are out of the question in any sober estimate of the economic situation. Speculative undertakings growing out of the Hoover inflation program, might provide a false flush of business activity during the coming months. If such activity should develop it would only add to the already existing overproduction of commodities and would intensify all the pressing contradictions of the economic crisis.

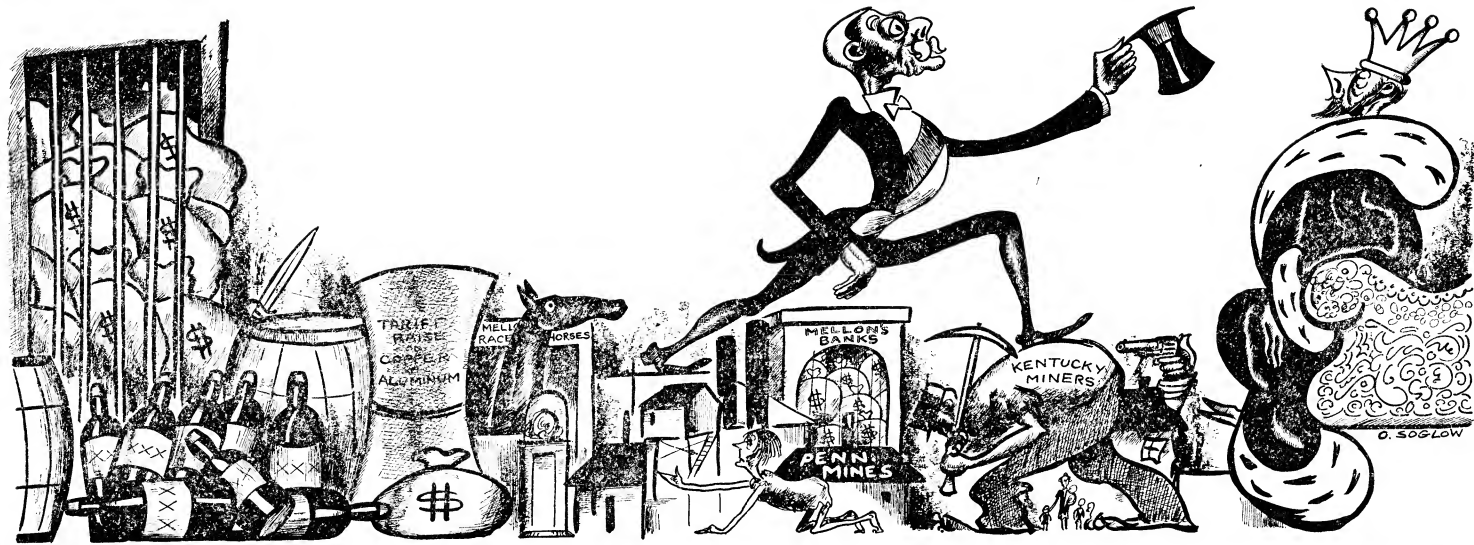
It would be absurd to interpret the capitalist problems as being an expression of lack of wealth in the hands of the capitalists. Even under present conditions American industry is adding to the funds under capitalist control. The point is that such additions are inadequate to provide steady profits on the basis of swollen capitalizations. Recapitalization is inevitable and the longer it is delayed the more drastic will be its consequences.

American capitalists have embarked consciously upon a program which can in no way help to solve the economic crisis but which on the contrary must intensify it. They do this because of the desperateness of their immediate situation, because recapitalization admits that the famous New Era is definitely over, because individually and collectively they are driven to postpone the tremendous losses of recapitalization as long as possible, because they are afraid of the social consequences of throwing large numbers of former capitalists into the ranks of the working class, because they have no time or ability to consider things fundamentally in the face of the immediate terror that overwhelms them. This is an election year, and added social tension cannot be risked. With all this in mind, American capitalism puts forward its Hoover program, not enthusiastically, not too optimistically—as the statements of business leaders will indicate—but with an intransigence born of despair. The capitalists may well despair. The new burdens they are endeavoring to place upon the toiling masses will call forth a bitterness of working class resistance of which they do not dream.



LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD

Otto Soglow



LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD

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In 1916 Tom Mooney and Warren Billings were arrested on a frameup charge of bombing the San Francisco preparedness parade. They were framed because they were militant labor leaders.



They were saved from death by workers' demonstrations the world over particularly by the workers of revolutionary Petrograd.

CORLISS LAMONT

THE MEANING OF THE MOONEY CASE

In the brutal and unintelligent system known as capitalism it is almost inevitable that there should occur, along with many other appalling evils, frame-ups of workers like Tom Mooney. Mooney well knows how closely his case is linked up with the capitalist system. In an open letter to Warren Billings, his fellow-victim, he says: "Our loyal devotion and militant services to organized labor have gained us the undying hatred of that all-powerful foe—Capital Organized Capital framed us . . . mobilized all its forces to bring about our destruction, tried to completely discredit the labor movement, forever wipe out the closed shop, and make San Francisco a non-union open shop town."

Mooney's opinion was corroborated on the floor of the Senate by Senator Nye of North Dakota, who said: "These men were convicted as a result of a corrupt conspiracy involving certain public utility interests of San Francisco which hated Mooney and Billings because they had been active in leading strikes. There is plenty of evidence from the record which shows the whole deal was engineered by detective Martin Swanson and that Swanson had previously attempted to frame Mooney on two occasions. When the explosion took place Swanson resigned from the public utility employ and went to work for the district attorney, and was instrumental in engineering the whole dastardly frame-up." Senator Nye added: "There is evidence that the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, whose detective engineered the frame-up against Mooney and Billings, has in the past few years spent huge sums of money in California politics. Apparently three successive governors have not dared to go contrary to the wishes of these campaign contributors."

In spite of this penetrating analysis, Senator Nye remains a member of the Republican Party. Other progressives and liberals,

who have been helpful and courageous in the campaign to free Tom Mooney, likewise remain loyal in one way or another to the system which betrayed him. They fail to see the implications of this case, its connection with other outrages against labor in this and other countries, and the inter-connection of all these wrongs with the capitalist system. As far as I know, very few liberals have recognised this fact. For this reason no matter how devoted and generous they are, their efforts are doomed to fall far short of the desired goal.

The only way permanently to put an end to the framing and imprisonment of workers and their sympathizers is permanently to put an end to capitalism.

There are and have been scores of Tom Mooneys in every land and probably there will be scores more. We must do more than protest against Mooney cases. We must in every instance tie up our protests with the struggle against a capitalist and for a socialist society. By failing to do this, the liberals never touch the root causes of these frame-ups. They can help only *after* such cases as that of Mooney. Sacco-Vanzetti, the Scottboro boys, have actually arisen—when it may be too late. But the only way to abolish the sickness of society, as of individuals, is to abolish the fundamental causes. And my challenge to all so-called liberals and progressive is to think through the inescapable implications of the Mooney case and then join the ranks of a movement far more basic than liberalism or progressivism—the movement to get rid of capitalism.

Our immediate task in frame-up cases is to strive for the freedom of the Tom Mooneys; but the second and more fundamental task, always accompanying the first one, is that of achieving a socialist society and of burying capitalism deep in the deep, deep deep grave where it belongs.



Tom Mooney has many "liberal" and "progressive" friends including Jimmy Walker, William Green, and Norman Thomas, BUT



—He still remains in jail. He can be freed only by the revolutionary action of the militant workers.

JOSHUA KUNITZ

COUNTER-STATEMENT

The fundamental postulate of Marxism is that *existence determines consciousness*. But existence is an eternal flow, a continuum of change. Each historical moment, each existing form, contains not only survivals of the past but the germs of the future. Within the depths of the existing there is always an accumulation and sharpening of contradictions; in it there are always discernible the seeds of its negation, destruction and final disappearance. Life is movement. Every form of life is transitional. Consciousness, too, is perennially moving, changing; the forms and content of this movement and change are *ultimately* determined by the material factor, by the manner in which people obtain their food, and by the social (class) alignments resulting therefrom. Ideological changes and conflicts are ultimately traceable to material changes. Not unless one understands the economic substratum and the class nature of present society can one hope to understand the apparently confusing and meaningless differences among various schools, groups and tendencies in every field of thought.

It is the vulgar materialist who insists that production, the relation of man to nature, the economic process is the *only* thing that determines the historical process; that ideological superstructures are merely reflections of the historical process, and that therefore they cannot possibly affect the process itself, or exercise any influence upon each other.

To maintain this is to maintain that art, science, philosophy and similar ideological disciplines have no organizing role in the class struggle. To maintain this is to maintain that science does not influence philosophy, that philosophy does not influence art, that theory does not influence practice. Needless to say this is not Marxism. Surely the Russian Marxists would hardly dare to expound such ideas while engaged in spreading propaganda, directing education, censoring books, fighting religion and endeavoring to change the ideology of their opponents. The contradiction between profession and practice in such a case would be so glaring

that even the most efficient dictatorship could scarcely hope to reconcile it.

In view of this it is somewhat amusing to find Kenneth Burke, * in an effort to offer an "apology for poesy," assailing the economic determinists on the ground that the latter assert that "changes in art are *caused* by the changes in political and economic conditions." It is not "very sound dialectic"; Burke argues, "to assume that because two things change concomitantly one can be called exclusively a cause of the other. If mere concurrence can prove causation, why could not an opponent assume from the same facts that the changes in art and ideas caused the changes in economic conditions?"

Excellent! Burke scores an easy victory; in a few pages he confutes the arguments developed by Marx, Engels, the old Kautsky, Plekhanov and Lenin in scores of volumes. Indeed, Burke says, "we know, for example, that the feminist 'aesthetic' served as preparation for the emancipation of women: here is an obvious example of an attitude affecting a change in social structure." But what economic determinist in his senses says that an "attitude" cannot affect a change in social structure? (Incidentally, though his conclusion is sound, the example Burke offers is rather unfortunate. Does he seriously mean that the feminist "aesthetic" was antecedent to the industrial revolution and to the entrance of woman into industry?)

The trouble is that Burke confuses *determinism* with *causation*; arguing against economic causation, he thinks he is attacking economic determinism. "When a man solves a problem," he ironizes, "we should hardly say that his solution is 'caused' by the problem to be solved." True, we should hardly say 'caused' when the correct word is *determined*. Carrying out his analogy, Burke continues: "Similarly, the particular ways of seeing and feeling which the thinker or the artist develops to cope with a situa-

* *Counter-Statement*, by Kenneth Burke. Harcourt-Brace.



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—He still remains in jail. He can be freed only by the revolutionary action of the militant workers.

tion . . . the kinds of action they stimulate by their attitudes toward the situation are not 'caused' by the situation which they are designed to handle." Right again: not *caused* but *determined*. Why Burke insists on fighting shadows, on using *caused* when the proper word is *determined* is difficult to explain. Is this another case of mistaken identity?

Burke is wrong when he indiscriminately attributes to all economic determinists the assertion that "changes in art are caused by changes in economic conditions." No. Since change (the dialectical process) is inherent in art as in any other phenomenon, it is the *nature* of the change that is ultimately determined (not "caused") by the economic and social complex.

Of course, the fault is not wholly Burke's. He is fighting the "detractors of art", he is fighting the V. F. Calvertons. Indeed, Burke, like so many bourgeois editors and columnists, unwittingly, we take it, identifies Calverton's much trumpeted "Marxism" with real historical materialism. This is unfortunate. For it was exactly of such vulgar materialists or pseudo Marxists as Calverton that Engels once wrote: "The materialist conception of history has gained many friends who are using it as a pretext for not studying history . . . What all these gentlemen lack is dialectics. They are always seeing a cause here, a consequence there. They fail to see that this is an empty abstraction, that such metaphysical, polar contradictions exist in the actual world only in times of crises, that the whole great process occurs in the form of interaction (although the interacting forces are not equal: the economic movement being the much stronger, the basic, the determining), that there is nothing absolute here, that everything here is relative."

Now, this, I hope, will convince Kenneth Burke that the historical materialists lay no claim to any "absolute sanction," and that together with him they are ready to combat and expose the cheap, vulgar, pseudo-Marxist "detractors of art."

But if there may be some difference between the Marxists and Burke regarding the genesis of art there are points of agreement as to its nature. Not a Marxist (a real Marxist, a bolshevik) but would subscribe to Burke's claim that art is "an educative and coercive force." But while the Marxist, definitely associated with the revolutionary proletariat, points out the *function* of this educative and coercive force in a society divided into exploiting and exploited classes, shows that in such a society art becomes first and foremost a means of class domination and class assertion, a powerful weapon in the class struggle, Burke only indulges in a "consideration" of the "effects" an artist should strive to produce at the "present time." He does not adequately analyze the economic alignments in contemporary society nor indicate with any clarity the social class which the artist is to serve.

Like the Marxists, Burke is aware that "the artist, who is seeking to adjust a vocabulary to a situation . . . is necessarily sensitive to both the surviving and the emergent factors in the situation"; nevertheless throughout his discussion he fails to indicate the really significant surviving and emergent factors in the present American situation. His program is essentially an innocuous and petty nihilism; his "negative" aesthetic is the philosophy of the "petit bourgeois gone mad." Inefficiency, indolence, dissipation, vacillation, mockery, distrust, hypochondria, non-conformity, bad sportsmanship, dislike of propaganda, dislike of certainty, treason—these, according to Burke, are the desiderata at the present moment, these are the emphases required to confute the bloated bourgeois, the machine, the efficiency expert, the patrioteer.

Spitefulness, sticking out the tongue, that is his "program."

It reminds one of the international "program" of the bohemians: *épater le bourgeois*, and particularly of the attitude revealed in Dostoevsky's *Notes From Underground*, where the hero, to spite the smug, efficient members of his family, exaggerates his toothache into a universal hypochondria, into a burkian nihilism, exclaiming:

"I am worrying you, I am lacerating your hearts, I am keeping everyone in the house awake. Well, stay awake then; you, too, feel every minute that I have a toothache. I am not a hero to you now, as I have tried to seem before, but simply a nasty person, an impostor. Well, so be it, then! I am very glad that you see through me. It is nasty for you to hear my despicable moans: well, let it be nasty; here I will let you have a nastier flourish in a minute . . . You do not understand even now, gentlemen? No,

it seems our development and our consciousness must go further to understand all the intricacies of this pleasure. You laugh? Delighted. My jests, gentlemen, are of course in bad taste, jerky, involved, lacking self confidence. But of course that is because I do not respect myself. Can a man of perception respect himself at all?"

Of course, the "petit bourgeois gone mad," having no base, always fluctuating between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between fascism and revolution, flirting with this or that class purpose which he is never sure is his own, finds it hard to respect himself. His perceptions are not clear for his class basis is not clear. Hence his nasty flourishes, his spitefulness, his sticking out of the tongue.

The proletariat—which has risen from being "a class by itself to a class for itself"—is a negation of bourgeois society, yet it lives not merely by negative but also by positive values. It urges not "treason" but loyalty—loyalty to the revolution; not "indolence" but energy—energy for the revolution; not "dissipation" but self-discipline, not "mockery" but creativeness, not "hypochondria" but joy in the struggle for a new world. The working class, the Soviet Union, the world revolution—these are the significant "emergent" factors in contemporary life; these are the most powerful negation of collapsing capitalism.

Would not the positive alliance with these new emerging factors be a greater source of power and satisfaction even to the petit bourgeois artist than a peevish self-indulgence in futile spitefulness? Would not serving the revolution make art a genuine "educative" and "coercive" force? Burke and those sections of the petit bourgeois intelligentsia for whom he speaks have come to a crossroads: one way leads to psychosis, neurosis, moral disintegration, death; the other to health, vigor, movement, intense struggle for a new life.



William Gropper

"A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE HOME"

International Woman's Day: March 8: Out of the kitchen into the struggle for freedom from capitalist exploitation and household drudgery for workers' wives.



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A PROPHET OF DOOM

Capitalist society divorces mental from physical work; its idealogues are remote from the process of production; consequently they tend to romanticize the machine, in prosperity optimistically, in depression pessimistically. During the Coolidge era the machine was a "saviour," now it is a "monster." The sharpening of the crisis and the inability of capitalism to solve such problems as overproduction and unemployment, has developed a school of American economists who attack the "overmechanization" of industry and suggest the limitation of machinery.

Stuart Chase, for example, complains bitterly that the machine has spread and multiplied as an autonomous creature according to its own laws, so that man finds himself "surrounded and dominated by a new race of wild and dangerous beasts." Having found in the course of his researches that mechanized industry makes enormous speculative profits through the production of inferior food products, he can think of no better solution than to advise housewives to grind their own flour and bake their own bread.

He is not alone in this bewildered flight from mechanization. Dr. Parker H. Willis, former secretary of the Federal Reserve Board, writes: "Time was not long ago when we were much inclined to boast about the extent we had developed and installed labor saving devices in American industry. We were wont to tell the foreigner how little work in this country was done by hand, how many billions of dollars we had expended in perfecting the most elaborate equipment capable of turning out unheard of quantities of goods. The more highly mechanized an industry became, we seemed to believe, the more nearly that industry approached the ideal. We are beginning now to learn better Many manufacturers today are wondering whether they have not seriously overdone the matter of mechanizing their plants."

Dr. Willis is rather pessimistic about the future of capitalism; he has little faith in the theory that the return to "normal business conditions" will provide sufficient markets for the existing plant equipment, and fears a permanent restriction of foreign markets. He therefore concludes that "it is at least fair to question whether many of the millions of dollars that have of late years been expended in the utmost mechanization of processes will not have a substantial part to be written off as loss."

In this plea for less mechanization, Stuart Chase and Dr. Willis are joined by Assistant Secretary of Agriculture R. W. Dunlap who recently urged the farmers to breed more horses in order to meet the demand created by the inability of other farmers to purchase and maintain tractors. There are indications that the crisis has compelled the revival of many domestic crafts such as food-preserving, bread-making, clothes-making and dress-making, which now compete with mass production in the factories. In many places there is a false attempt to meet the problem of unemployment relief by the use of hand labor instead of machinery. There are localities which provide jobs to the unemployed by constructing roads with pick and shovel instead of machinery. This is one aspect of capitalist resistance to the dole; businessmen believe that it is better to give the unemployed inefficient, wasteful and even useless labor rather than grant their demand for direct relief.

The fear of technics is not accidental nor is it confined to the United States. Technical retrogression in all capitalist countries and technical expansion in the Soviet Union reflect the profound contradictions of the epoch of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. The attitude of the bourgeois toward machinery during the decay of capitalism contrasts sharply with his attitude at the dawn of the factory system. Originally the bourgeois was enthusiastic about machinery since it was the source of his wealth and power obtained through the exploitation of the worker. On the other hand, the worker of the nineteenth century could not distinguish between the capitalist and the capitalist use of machinery, nor did he understand the class origin of technics; hence he revolted against the machine as the source of his slavery. Today, however, the revolutionary movement of the proletariat directs its blow against the *capitalist use* of the machine and not the machine itself. At the same time, capitalism and capitalist technics are lost in a blind alley. The capitalist is no longer an entrepreneur; he is an absentee owner, often a banker, who monopolizes the ownership of existing machinery but resists any technological ad-

vance which threatens to encroach on his profits. He realizes that the progress of technics intensifies the contradictions in the capitalist system, that it develops the class-consciousness and power of the proletariat, spells the doom of the profit system and opens the way to socialism. In the nineteenth century the advance of technics meant the advance of capitalism; in the twentieth it can only mean the advance of socialism. That is why the Soviet Union not only does but must develop technics as the indispensable base of a socialist society, as the fundamental material condition for the liberation of mankind; while capitalism struggles against technics, deliberately sabotages its advance and encourages its retrogression in the desperate hope that a flight from technics will save the profit system from the storm of the revolution.

This fear of technology which is no longer on their side explains the retreat of the bourgeoisie from their earlier optimistic materialism to various forms of idealistic pessimism. The role of contemporary bourgeois philosophy is almost exclusively that of defending and consoling a decaying order of society. Its absorption in idealistic ethics as opposed to science may be said to be analogous to a similar disintegration in thought which reflected the decay of the Greek and Roman ruling classes, and the godseeking which accompanied the breakup of the Romanov empire. The west-European and American bourgeoisie also has its godseekers. The philosophic symbols of Whitehead, Lodge, Jeans, Eddington, and Millikan may differ from those of Pobedenostzeff and Dostoevsky, but their goal is the same. Man (i.e. bourgeois man) is unable to solve his problems, but "God will provide"; He may no longer thunder from the heavens, but the still, small voice may speak through mathematical signs.

Those who cannot find consolation even in a mathematical god, lean on the fatalistic prophecies of Oswald Spengler, the most articulate jeremiah against technical progress. This poet of despair continues the prophecies made in *The Decline of the West* in his analysis of "man and technics."* Spengler's "contribution to a philosophy of life" is a rhetorical echo of Nietzsche.

"Man", he says, "is a beast of prey. Acute thinkers like Montaigne and Nietzsche have always known this. Cleverness in the human sense, acute cleverness, belongs only to the beasts of prey."

This is Nietzsche in modern dress; but while the Polish poet voiced the piratical aspirations of a vigorous prewar Prussian imperialism, the German schoolmaster voices the impotent rage of a bankrupt bourgeoisie writhing in the grip of French finance and militarism and shuddering at the prospect of a proletarian revolution. Impotent rage often leads to hysteria; hence Nietzsche's "great blond beast" becomes Spengler's "beast of prey"—the junker becomes the fascist.

Terrified by the approaching proletarian revolution, Spengler predicts the end of machine technics and the destruction of "western civilization". He identifies the end of bourgeois culture with the end of all human culture; and, as the nineteenth century workers attempted to destroy machinery because it was a weapon in the hands of capitalism, he urges its destruction because it is a weapon in the hands of the revolution. He would leave no legacy to the triumphant proletariat; he thinks of his class as a blinded and shorn Samson praying for a last outburst of strength in order to pull down the roof on its enemies as well as itself. It begrudges the proletariat its heritage of culture. "The aim of humanity," he says, "is to free every individual of a large part of work which can be done by a machine, but freedom of the 'wage slaves' from poverty, equality in comfort and luxury, equality in enjoyment of art is a cry of 'bread and circuses'." Rome perished with its slaves; let capitalism also perish with its "wage slaves" and its mechanical slaves. Only the ruling classes, have a right to life and the enjoyment of art; without bankers and businessmen civilization must perish.

And it seems, nothing can solve it. "It is out of the power either of heads or of hands," according to Spengler, "to alter in any way the destiny of machine technics, for this has developed out of inward spiritual necessities and is now correspondingly maturing toward its fulfillment and end. . . . The last decisions are taking place, the tragedy is closing Only dreamers believe that there

* *Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life: by Oswald Spengler. Knopf.*

is a way out. Optimism is *cowardice*. We are born into this time and must bravely follow the path to the destined end. There is no other way. Our duty is to hold on to the lost position without hope, without reason . . . That is greatness . . . The honorable end is the one thing that cannot be taken from a man."

The bourgeoisie, then, must die, but it should die "honorably." This bombastic phrase can have only one meaning; to die "honorably" is to die fighting under the banner of one's own class, in this case the black banner of fascism. This is a cry of despair from a doomed class, truly "without hope, without reason." No "reason" is necessary; the mere utterance of despair is sufficient to make Spengler the intellectual hero of the bourgeoisie although his book is full of absurdities and false analogies. The bourgeoisie which once used science as a weapon against the feudal order now turns to a prophet who in a book on "man and technics" dismisses all the evolutionary sciences with a contemptuous footnote. Spengler is compelled to be absurd in his thinking in order to maintain his loyalty to a class "without hope, without reason." He must

distort not only the future but the past; it does not matter that his knowledge of man's history is false, so long as it supports his desperate conclusion.

It is typical of the present state of the American middle-class that it hails Spengler as a great thinker. His books are considered among the few great works of the century, despite the fact that middle-class critics admit they contain much that is absurd. In the face of these absurdities, the critics applaud him because his prophecies of doom are an "antidote" to ideas of progress and to faith in the future and because "there is always the suspicion that he may be right." In one sense, Spengler is right; bourgeois progress has come to an end, and capitalism has no future. But the proletariat has taken up the thread of human progress; hence it has hope and reason. It seeks more technics and more knowledge for socialist enterprises. Despite Spengler, the world will not perish nor will culture; only capitalism will perish; the future belongs to the working class which is building a classless society for the first time in history.

THE CRISIS AND THE SCHOOLS

One of the chief reasons why the American intelligentsia is swinging toward the left and beginning to read Marxist literature is that it has been severely hit by the economic crisis not as an idea but directly. Liberal writers issue manifestoes on the effect of the depression on literature and philosophy; but behind these new aesthetic concepts is the bitter reality of wage cuts and unemployment which has affected all intellectual workers, from the most highly skilled engineers and technicians to the teachers in the elementary schools.

Capitalism, which claims to be the custodian of culture, has thrown the school teacher aside in the present crisis in order to reduce the taxes of businessmen. Throughout the United States tax revenues are falling. Cities, villages and counties are rapidly going bankrupt. Consequently, the wages of many of the 700,000 teachers have been drastically reduced. In many cases they are not paid at all. Numerous school buildings have been closed. Many rural communities have shortened the school term from one to three months this year. In extreme cases all public education has stopped.

In capitalist America, when a city, town or county curtails expenditures in order to balance its budget, education, like unemployment relief is one of the first public services to suffer. It should be noted, however, that the police receive their wages long after the pay of teachers has been stopped. Capitalist society considers education far less important than the protection of private property. In Chicago, for instance, where school teachers have received only six weeks pay since April of last year, the police were paid until quite recently when the complete bankruptcy of the city compelled the authorities to abandon even that form of capitalist insurance. Many Chicago teachers are starving. Even city officials admit this. They estimate that out of 18,000 teachers, about 7,000 eat no lunch because of lack of funds. Some teachers have been so hard hit economically that they are compelled to skip other meals also. As a result class work has been demoralized. Many teachers are simply too weak physically to be able to direct their students. Chicago authorities report that teachers have actually collapsed in the class room from lack of food.

Conditions are even worse in rural communities. Mississippi spent its last funds for its rural schools when the nominal school term was only half over. Most of the rural teachers continue their class room work although many receive no pay and have to get their food and lodgings through the charity of the parents of their pupils. School bus drivers who transport pupils long distances to regional schools are also unpaid, and many busses have had to be discontinued for lack of oil and gasoline. In Arkansas so many schools closed this year that the average rural term of six months has been cut to four.

Sometimes the withholding of teachers wages is disguised by the scrip system. In the industrial cities of Michigan, teachers are being paid in scrip—paper promises. In Alabama and Texas teachers have been paid in scrip since November. Scrip, of course, is not currency. Merchants accept it at their own risk. Therefore they charge a large discount, and often refuse the scrip altogether for fear that the paper promise will never be redeemed.

This fear is not unjustified. Chicago merchants have in their tills millions of dollars of worthless notes issued to teachers and other municipal employees.

Those teachers who still receive wages have suffered wage cuts of five to twenty per cent. These cuts are sometimes disguised as "refunds" in order to evade the provisions of yearly contracts which "guarantee" certain rates of pay to teachers. The school authorities of New York and other cities have devised other indirect wage cuts. They "request" teachers to contribute five to ten percent of their yearly wages to a charity fund for hungry pupils. In addition to these official levies for charity, most teachers give individual sums to suffering children in their class rooms. Malnutrition is widespread among school children throughout the country. Even in those cities where suffering is not yet as intense as in the outlying farming and industrial regions, there is acute distress.

A New York high school teacher told the author: "Many of my children are hungry, starved and in rags. At noon scores stand around eating no lunch." A Negro teacher in a New York school for Negro children said: "Some of my children were fat two years ago. They are thin now. Month by month I see their energy ebbing. There is less employment among the Negroes than among the whites. I visit homes where furniture has been sold for food, but the children come to school anyhow. They are so eager to learn." This is how Hoover's theory of "private initiative" in relieving distress affects school teachers who were once so proud that they belonged to an individualistic profession.

Negro schools have suffered most during the crisis. A southern school principle reports that whenever further economy in education is necessary the school board orders to "take it off the niggers." Florida is closing its rural Negro schools before its white schools. The Negro schools, of course, were discriminated against long before the economic crisis. The southern states spend little enough for the education of poor white children, but only a small fraction of that miserable sum is allotted to the education of Negro children. South Carolina, which owes its school teachers \$1,000,000, spends only ten percent of its educational budget on Negro children, although Negroes constitute the overwhelming majority of the state's population. The wages of Negro teachers throughout the south is fifty percent less on the average than the wages of the poorly paid white teachers. Furthermore, each Negro teacher must take care of many more pupils than the white teacher. Race discrimination extends even to school buildings. Negro schools in the south are small, unrepaired, filthy.

Unemployment is widespread among teachers throughout the country. Even in the larger cities where educational budgets have been cut much less than in the poverty-stricken rural districts many schools have been closed and pupils have been transferred to other already overcrowded schools. Many night schools for adults have also been closed. It is estimated that more than one-third of New York city's school teachers are unemployed.

Even before the crisis unemployment was prevalent among school teachers. The real estate interests and the big industrial corporations induced municipal governments to cut school expenses in the

working class districts in order to keep tax rates at a low level. To "normal" unemployment has been added the tremendous unemployment caused by the depression. As a result "rationalization" in its vicious capitalist forms has invaded the public schools as well as the factories. The average New York school teacher today is compelled to take charge of forty to forty-eight pupils as compared with thirty-five ten years ago. Officially teachers' class room hours are five a day. In practice, however, they often work longer than many factory workers. Teachers frequently work until midnight correcting papers.. In New York a teacher must give weekly examinations to each pupil. If he has five or six classes with more than forty pupils each, it means that he has to correct more than two hundred papers. In addition, the teacher is also expected to "volunteer" as a school club leader, athletic director, or for anyone of the many extra-curricular activities which are never referred to in a teacher's contract. This extra work for which teachers receive no additional pay enables the authorities to dispense with thousands of more teachers who would otherwise be necessary.

As a result of this overwork, nervous breakdowns are common among teachers. In every New York school several teachers are always absent on sick leave. They receive no pay while sick if they are substitutes. It must be remembered that substitutes constitute a considerable group among teachers.

The exploited teachers are losing their professional self-respect. They have become demoralized, hopeless or cynical about

their work. Their duties are now not only those of teachers but in the main those of bureaucratic clerks and disciplinarians. They have no initiative and can have none under capitalism where the courses of study and methods of instruction are rigidly prescribed in the interests of the ruling classes. Any teacher with advanced theories of education cannot apply them for fear of losing his job. A scientific social viewpoint is forbidden and teachers are compelled to instill into their students a spirit of extreme national chauvinism. Anything which does not give moral and intellectual support to the decaying capitalist order is taboo. Even the information which teachers are compelled to impart to their students is absurdly out of date, and although religion and government are supposed to be separate in the United States the reading of the bible is compulsory in the public schools of twelve states. In twenty-four other states this practice is frequent although forbidden by law.

Only a small portion of teachers belong to a trade union. The teachers union of the A. F. of L. has local branches in a number of cities; but, as is typical of the A. F. of L. fascist activities, this union confines its activities to legislative lobbying and opposition to strikes. Recently the militant Education Workers League was formed in order to organize unemployed and exploited educational workers. Here teachers who have emerged from the mist of white-collared psychology have found the path to the worldwide struggle of all workers for a new society.

ALLEN ANDREWS

ROBERT L. CRUDEN

Open Letter to Edsel Ford

(The author of this open letter, an unemployed Ford worker who has contributed stories to the New Masses, informs us that his 19-year old brother was shot in the Ford massacre. They are holding him in the hospital but will not allow his family or comrades to see him).

You, a patron of the arts, a pillar of the Episcopal Church, stood on the bridge at the Rouge plant and saw four workers killed and over twenty wounded. You did not lift a hand to stop it, and when the massacre—for massacre it was—was over your only care was for your own hireling, Bennett, who was hit on the head with a stone.

Did it please your esthetic fancy to see the trampled snow dyed with the blood of the workers?

Did it exalt your piety to have your gunmen batter with lead the bodies of hungry men and boys?

Did it fit your sense of leadership to kill the men who came for bread?

For a long time, Edsel Ford, your company has bitterly oppressed and exploited the workers, driving them at their jobs, terrorizing them with your service department. But news of this has never been published—exploitation and human misery are not "news" to the capitalist press. But even worse than this, your company has systematically flooded the country with lying propaganda.

I will remind you of a few instances. Several years ago the Ford company announced that henceforth it would go on the five day week, that as soon as the workers produced in five days what they had formerly produced in six they would receive six days' pay. They did—they sweated and broke themselves to produce—but your company added not a penny to their wages.

In 1929 your father said the company would raise wages to a minimum of seven dollars a day. The fact that most of the raises amounted to only 20 and 40 cents a day, instead of the dollar which your father led everyone to believe, is not important here. What is important is that almost coincident with the wage raise 30,000 men were laid off from the Rouge plant and those left at work were almost driven to distraction to increase their output. I was working in your Rouge plant at the time and can repeat my own experiences to you should you care to listen to them.

Your company has persistently published the statement that

wages are not reduced at the Ford plants. Yet you know that long before your officials admitted the reduction to six dollars a day that men were being transferred from department to department and their wages cut as they were moved; that men of long standing in the company, who were making \$8 and \$9 a day, were laid off and rehired at \$6 a day. You know all this—and yet you raise no voice against your company's lies.

For the last three years, at Christmas time—when even the poorest of us try to make merry—your company has published reports of hiring tens of thousands of men. You lied. You knew that at the most you would be hiring only a few hundred. Yet untold thousands of us stood and froze for nights on end before your Rouge plant, relying on your faithless promises. We have not forgotten it.

To those of us who have worked in your plant and come in contact with your service department this outrage was not wholly unexpected. As you know, your service department is almost wholly recruited from thugs and ex-prize fighters—Harry Bennett, the head of the department, is an ex-prize fighter himself—and into this group you have placed absolute power over the workers. They can fire, beat up, do anything to a working man—and for this they are paid and approved by your company. You know this as well as I do but should you like to have instances related I shall only be too glad to refresh your memory.

Perhaps we could endure that—an open enemy is to be preferred to a concealed enemy. But what can you say for your undercover men, that branch of the service department which mixes with the workers, speaks with them, eggs them on to speak, and then has them fired when they dare criticize Sorenson, your father, or yourself.

And then the Dearborn police, that noble band of martyrs who so valiantly shot down unarmed men and boys, how well have they repaid your terroristic campaign to have your father's cousin made mayor of Dearborn, in which your Rouge plant is located! It was worthwhile, was it not, to send your service men into the homes of your Dearborn workers and warn them to vote for Clyde Ford on pain of losing their jobs?

Do not fear, Edsel Ford, that we want your life—it is worthless to us. But the steel which battered down our brothers has not cowed us—it has entered our bodies and our spirits, steeling within us the resolve to carry on the struggle for a workers' world in which there shall be neither exploitation nor massacre.

BOOKS

Mr. Huxley's Private Devil

Brave New World, by Aldous Huxley. Doubleday, Doran & Co. \$2.50.

Those who have read Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* will recall the passage in which Ivan, on the verge of an attack of brain fever, receives a visit from the devil. This devil is no great shakes of a fellow: he has no horns, he can't belch flame and smoke, he hasn't even got a tail. No, he's only a poor devil of a liberal gentleman who sits on the edge of his chair mouthing platitudes, and as Ivan listens in agony to his visitor's stupid, revolting drivel, he suddenly realizes with horror that this devil is his own creation and that what he is saying is only what Ivan himself has said in his most brilliant moments.

I could not help thinking of this passage while reading Aldous Huxley's burlesque utopia, *Brave New World*, nor wondering how Huxley would take his punishment if some day his own little private devil were to retail to him some of the piffle he has wholesaled to us.

"It is idiotic," says one of Huxley's characters, "writing when there's nothing to say . . ."

"Precisely," replies Mustapha Mond, resident ruler of the western world. "But that requires the most enormous ingenuity."

We grant Huxley that he has nothing to say in his latest book. Let us examine briefly the cipher he accomplishes with such "enormous ingenuity."

We are living in the seventh century of our Ford. The bible is the Life and Works of Henry Ford, published by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Detroit. Ford's in his flivver, all's right with the world. Children are decanted, not born, and while it is always hard for the young to distinguish between smut and pure science, such ancient savage words as mother, family, marriage, birth, etc. bring the blush of shame to the cheeks of all properly decanted youth. Human beings are manufactured in different classes and so conditioned from their test tube days on that true infantile happiness and permanent satisfaction with one's position in life is guaranteed. For moments of doubt or depression there is always *soma*, a superior form of dope that is used freely by the ruling class, and dealt out as pay to the laboring class which is a sort of multitudinous indential deloused ape family. Sex—hormone chewing gum, obstacle golf, the feelies and love are the chief diversions. In the upper class, especially, the ladies and gents are very pneumatic (i. e. have sex appeal), promiscuity is the unquestioned convention—"to have" one of the opposite sex being the equivalent of our "to know"—and the ladies are equipped with pretty Malthusian belts packed with contraceptives. The world is governed by ten resident rulers; there are no wars; the greatest happiness of the greatest number—a code of infantilism, according to Mr. Huxley—is the law and the prophets, and every potentiality in life that militates against this law is rigorously and ingeniously suppressed or eliminated.

"Our Ford himself did a great deal to shift the emphasis from truth and beauty to comfort and happiness," says Mustapha Mond. "Mass production demanded the shift. Universal happiness keeps the wheels steadily turning; truth and beauty can't. And, of course, whenever the masses seized political power, then it was happiness rather than truth and beauty that mattered." (Italics mine).

Today, in other words, with all our faults, we still have truth and "beauty" (in museums). But once let the masses sieze political power and goodbye "truth," goodbye "beauty"—we'll have only comfort and happiness then in a Ford model-T, super-robot world. The inference holds good all down the line of Huxley's reasoning in *Brave New World*.

Huxley, then, has constructed a fantastic utopia, a sort of super social-fascist state, for the express purpose of burlesquing what he has constructed. He thus affords himself the cherished opportunity of the bourgeois intellectual, the opportunity to exhibit his own cleverness, to satirize ideas which are after all only the measure of his own intellectual limitations.

We submit that this is a childish exhibition, and that for a writer of Huxley's potentialities to clown it about a fantastic state in the fantastic future is a cheap way of shirking his responsibilities as an intellectual and a writer. After all, he is a contemporary bourgeois Englishman, and if he insists on writing burlesque he might have begun much nearer home with far more devastating humor and truthful effect. The immediate facts he can read in the daily newspapers are more fantastic than his imaginings, as witness, to mention only one detail, a Tory government headed by a "socialist," by a pacifist who turns his face on the most ruthless suppression in India, as he does on Japanese imperialist ambitions in China.

Huxley is a good example of the bourgeois intellectual who considers himself above the battle and serves instead as an intelligence officer for the class he pretends to despise, who prides himself on his farsightedness and cannot see any further than his own nose.

EDWIN SEAVER

Passion and Pellagra

Tobacco Road, by Erskine Caldwell. Scribners'. \$2.50

Erskine Caldwell has told with a great deal of skill the story of the decay and dissolution of the Lester family. Yet somehow his characters fail to emerge full-blown. They are all dying of pellagra and starvation, yet other organs beside their stomachs seem to plague them the most. Lov's twelve year old bride for example, refuses to sleep with him, so he stops to ask the advice of Jeeter Lester, her father. He has a sack of turnips which he watches warily, lest the ravenous Lesters steal it. Ellie May, the hare-lipped daughter, begins "horsing," and slides her bare bottom along in the sand toward Lov, just as a hound does to allay its itch, according to Dude, the son. Dude also fears that Ellie May will thus get herself full of sand. Finally she springs on the frustrated bridegroom, and Dude cries excitedly: "Lov's going to big her. He's getting ready to do it right now, too. Look at him crawl around—he acts like an old stud-horse." Then Lov doesn't give a damn who gets the turnips and consequently old Jeeter runs off to the woods with them and eats most of them.

There's a great deal more about a passionate "woman preacher" who lusts after sixteen year old Dude, and marries him. Old Jeeter knows he shouldn't yearn after the "woman preacher" as he does, and considers "cutting himself off" in order to forestall further temptation. Dude is a little uncertain as to what the forty year old widow wants, but she soon teaches him.

The ancient grandma gets run over by a new car which the bride has bought with her former husband's insurance money. Grandma lies in the yard with her head caved in and everybody seems to be glad to be shut of her. Without being certain she is dead, they unceremoniously dump her in a shallow grave. This and other macabre touches suggest William Faulkner and the new school of Southern realists.

When the author ventures to explain the reason for the Lesters' degradation, he adduces that it is because a benevolent landlord has moved out of the vicinity, leaving his hapless serfs to fend for themselves. If the landlord had stayed and taught them "co-operative and corporate farming" he would have "saved them all." Bad sociology does not improve fiction.

Nevertheless, the story is gripping and Caldwell possesses a simple yet forceful style. The successive efforts of old Jeeter to pump up the worn out tires so he can take a load of wood to town, his annual nostalgia for the cotton fields and the fresh turned earth, Dude's contempt for his parent, and many other situations are vividly and convincingly portrayed. The author has also etched the effect of Jeeter's alternate hope and his steadily cumulative despair in a masterly fashion.

Caldwell is palpably capable of much better work, and it is a little disappointing to see him fall just short of his mark. He lacks social understanding which is the life of revolutionary prose. He is like a "bored and bilious God," unmoved by his subjects'

agonies. Yet out of the welter of detective thrillers, the amorous adventures of society dames, and the vicissitudes of poor but honest virgins, this book emerges as a social document of no small importance.

JACK CONROY

Friendly Enemies

The Price of Life, by Vladimir Lidin. Harper & Bros. \$2.00.
The Thief, by Leonid Leonov. The Dial Press. \$3.00.

Soviet life changes so rapidly that by the time a novel is written, published, translated and printed in English it is an historical document, rather than a reflection of contemporary Soviet reality. This should be borne in mind by American readers of Soviet fiction, and in particular by those "sympathetic" reviewers who are always so ready to expound Soviet conditions and Soviet life in the bourgeois press.

A specific case is the novel under review. The fact that it is a poor novel is beside the point. But it is typical that the jacket flaunts the sensational announcement that in this novel "youth is pitted against Soviet tyranny." This is to be expected from a venerable firm established in 1817 which recently rejected Dos Passos' "1919" because of its truthful portrait of J. P. Morgan the elder. One can hardly expect of Harper & Bros. a statement that Lidin's novel shows how a proletarian youth during the Nep period became detached from his class and lost all resistance to the bourgeois temptations of the predatory nepman. Despite Lidin's limitations as a writer and even as a fellow-traveller, it is only just to point out that nowhere in the novel does he "pit" Soviet youth against Soviet "tyranny." The publishers' misleading statement is obviously an attempt to boost the sales of the novel by falsifications calculated to please the bourgeois reader.

But unfortunately "sympathetic" reviewers and voluble "authorities" on the Soviet Union are often not much better in the appraisal of the new Russian literature. For example, the January 31 issue of *Books* contained a review of Lidin's novel by Professor Alexander Kaun from which it is difficult to determine whether the reviewer is really sympathetic or unsympathetic to the Soviet Union. But it is not at all difficult to see that he is very muddled about the issues involved. He speaks of Lidin's "independent and critical appraisal of existing conditions." It would seem that the reviewer does not realize that the Nep period is dead, that the kulak has been almost entirely eliminated, that the workers and peasants are triumphantly building socialism. Accordingly this reviewer says: "Along with the idealists and fanatics ready to sacrifice the comforts of the present for a problematic future, there are the normal, the human—all to human—yearners after the immediate." That is, there are the yearners after "money, women, luxury."

The reviewer fails to realize that these "yearners", who are "normal" types in the disintegrating capitalist civilization of America, are not at all "normal" figures in a country where a new life is being built, where the foundations of socialism are being laid. Even the most superficial observer of Soviet conditions knows that the average "normal" Russian youth is a worker, a comsomol, a Red soldier, a shock-brigadier, a student, a tractor-driver on a collective farm—wholesome, social, active.

The reviewer's vacillation has its reasons. It is natural for the middle-class intellectual to be skeptical, cautious, adaptable. But how can Professor Kaun—generally regarded as sympathetic to the Soviet Union—speak of an "independent and critical appraisal of existing conditions" and pass by in silence, without even the mildest disapproval, the publishers blurb which "pits" Soviet youth against Soviet "tyranny"?

It would not have been inappropriate for Professor Kaun to point out that even as an appraisal of Nep conditions Lidin's novel is to be taken with a large grain of salt. It follows a stereotype developed by the petit bourgeois fellow travellers. It belongs to the class of Valentine Katayev's *Embezzlers*, Leonid Leonov's *Thief* and Ilya Ehrenburg's *Rvach*. This kind of appraisal of Soviet life is colored by the class bias, the hopes, the tastes of the petit bourgeois author. All these novels deal with criminals. In nearly all cases the plot revolves around a murder or two. It is perhaps unsafe for these bourgeois writers to frankly glorify gamblers, embezzlers, thieves and murderers; it is much safer to pretend to portray their crimes, (which by implication reflect the individual's revolt against society) in such a romantic light as to

make criminals appear to be much more attractive than the austere, principled, moral, honest, hard working "virtuous" Communists. Of course, virtue triumphs at the end, generally at the very, very end, but this triumph is merely tacked on. The best and the most convincing parts of such novels as Lidin's, because they are the most sincerely felt, are those which deal with "sin" rather than "virtue."

After 335 pages of pathetic and ostensibly indignant description of how his hero Kiril degenerates into a speculator, a gambler and a murderer, Lidin in one paragraph at the end of the book suggests his redemption. Lidin prefers to write about and deplore the degeneration of a revolutionist, although this is not at all typical of the average bolshevik, rather than the development of one.

Similarly, Leonid Leonov, after 566 pages of careful description of the transformation of a Communist into a thief and a murderer, adds in his last paragraph: "The rest—how Mitka came to the woodcutters and was first beaten and then kindly received; how he worked in their guild and surfeited on the food which he earned with the heavy labor of tree-felling; how he toughened and went into a factory and studied (the great days of study had come into the land), and how he won again the name he had lost—all that is outside the scope of this story."

Unless one knows how to analyze such "appraisals" of Soviet life, one had better not generalize too hastily about what is "normal" or not "normal" in the Soviet Union. Here the Marxian, the class method of analysis would be very helpful to the "sympathetic" critic.

JOSHUA KUNITZ

The Brown Decades

The Brown Decades by Lewis Mumford. Harcourt Brace and Co. \$3.50.

In the *Brown Decades* (1865-1895), Mumford writes an apology for a period in the history of American arts and letters that needs no apology. Having observed that wars breed chaos, the author concludes that "beneath the foreign trappings of the seventies and eighties, we have become conscious of a life not unlike our own . . . Like our grandfathers we face the aftermath of a war which has undermined Western civilization as completely as the Civil War undermined the more hopeful institutions of our country". But there is a profound difference between the post-bellum period, in which American capitalism triumphed over the feudal South, and the post-war period, in which American imperialism reached its apogee.

With the defeat of the agrarian South, in the hurry and turmoil following the Civil War, American life was marked by the expansion of industrial America and the concentration of capital in the hands of the Rockefellers, Morgans, Goulds—the new industrial and banking lords. In 1865 capitalism was dynamic and progressive. The emerging proletariat—that social class whose function it will be eventually to abolish capitalism—was still weak and disorganized. Today, capitalism is hopeless and collapsing on every front; while the proletariat is preparing for its historic role of displacing the present order.

It is only natural that in the *Brown Decades* when capitalism was on the upgrade, that it should have put its imprint on the art of that period. Indeed, in spite of the characteristic brown that was used on public buildings, furniture and wall paper, these were the bright decades of bourgeois American art.

Styles in art are created from convictions based on social and economic relations. Mumford, ignoring the class relations of capitalist society, is unable to reconcile the existence of Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman with General Grant, Boss Tweed and the corruption which followed the Civil War. Hence he relegates Whitman in an arbitrary manner to the decade preceding the Civil War, the "golden days of American literature." He interprets the "brown decades" in terms of "neglected personalities"—the Roebellings and the Brooklyn Bridge; Olmstead and the city park and planning movement; Richardson, Root, Sullivan and the beginnings of a new architecture.

But whereas Whitman was an organic expression of the "brown decades", Richardson, Root and Sullivan particularly as expressed in their new architecture, were the expression of the new American bourgeoisie now in complete control. Whitman was the poet.

echo of frontier democracy now dead in fact and surviving only in myth.

While capitalism was abandoning competition for monopoly, art—pandering to the successful individual capitalist—inflated the cult of the individual big businessman, who had amassed an enormous fortune but had no cultural traditions and began to import artistic ideas from abroad. Art became one of the forms of “conspicuous consumption”; but in this field the American bourgeoisie could only feed indiscriminately on the past. Hence the Greek and Gothic revivals, the flamboyant styles, and the meaningless details which Mumford considers ugly. And if “order, fitness, comeliness, proportion” were words that could not be applied to the architecture of the “brown decades”, if “construction was submerged in that morass of jerry buildings, tedious archaisms, and spurious romanticism”, it was nevertheless the expression of the American bourgeois of the “brown decades”—greedy and sterile.

Unburdened by feudal traditions as was the architecture of Europe, American architecture followed the path determined by the growth of the cities, the law of rent and the rise of the working class. In addition to the construction of buildings for political, communal and administrative purposes, business required the construction of factories, railroad stations and prisons. Factories determine to a great extent the architectural character of the growing cities organically connected with the growth of the proletariat in capitalist society. In such society the proletariat has as yet no specific architecture of its own. Factories and tenements reflect not only the collective character of proletarian existence, but also its dreariness and poverty. In comparison with these buildings, the bourgeois sections of a capitalist city with their gardens, villas, and cottages, done in the most varying styles of the past, express the individualistic and competitive anarchy of the dominant class.

The atomic unit of bourgeois architecture is a separate room or house. Building in bourgeois society aims primarily to accumulate profit. The bourgeoisie is not concerned with improving living conditions for the mass of the population. Consequently, new forms in architecture arise out of the necessities of machine technique and the unity of work demands colossal and utilitarian architectural methods.

The development of the fine arts after the Civil War was determined by the appearance of a new class and not, as Mumford believes, by “the appearance of a new interest in aesthetics itself”. Mumford does not believe that bourgeois art is a class art. According to him, art at all times expresses a “communal” self-consciousness independent of classes. In analyzing the intellectual history of the United States, he distinguishes, like Parrington, three “broad” phases: calvinistic pessimism, romantic optimism and mechanistic pessimism. By these literary abstractions the author conceals the actual class relationships of the period. Hence it is not surprising that he says of Bellamy’s Utopia that “it reminds one not of an impossibly abstract and ideal humanity, but of the United States during the late period of ‘prosperity’ combined with Soviet Russia as it envisages itself today.” Only an author who ignores the class roots of capitalist society could reach such an amazing conclusion.

LEON DENNEN

Far Away and Long Ago

Only Yesterday, by Frederick Lewis Allen. Harper & Bros. \$3.00.

The Imperial Wizard of the Liberals, Stuart Chase, said of this book that he “read every word, every comma,” and its reputation was made. It is a best seller, already in its 90th thousand.

While the liberals hail it so joyfully as an authentic history of the 1920’s, the working class would be bored by its clever superficiality and its mild irony. The book is typically liberal in its gay airplane view of the post-war decade in the United States—a decade that saw the increasing exploitation of the workers here, the triumphant rise of the workers’ republic in the Soviet Union, and the line-up of Communism vs. Capitalism in the United States as in the rest of the world. But of these mighty underlying facts Allen seems to be unaware. Toward the few strikes and labor cases that he mentions he maintains the playful attitude which bourgeois society teaches its writer-servants to use. Nothing but trifles must be taken seriously. Laugh it off. Remember that comfortable, well-fed America (the only America that has money to buy books) lives on its sense of humor. Be “detached.” Above all, don’t offend anyone in high places. A little mild ridicule,

yes, but no bitterness toward the country’s masters. A word for labor now and then, of course, discreetly spread between thick slices of *status quo*. But don’t take the class-conscious workers seriously; they control less than 1% of the country’s votes.

Allen so ably follows this line that the cushioned middle and upper classes delight in reading his book. His treatment of the Sacco-Vanzetti case is typical of this “cool” and “detached” method of presentation. Hailing from Boston himself and now an editor of *Harpers’ Magazine*, the author cannot afford to offend President Lowell or anyone else in Back Bay circles. To speak in behalf of two revolutionary workers would have been to take sides against the ruling class. Simply impossible. Hence Allen writes of Sacco and Vanzetti in such a way that even President Lowell himself (who is touchy on the subject) can not be offended.

A shadow of “reasonable doubt” as to the men’s guilt falls across the book chiefly because Vanzetti was “an intellectual.” The implication is that if Vanzetti had been an ordinary workingman, less intellectual, he would have been guilty of the payroll robbery and murder. With just this suggestion of doubt, the case is dismissed in the way Allen’s middle-class readers want it dismissed. As if the case ended with the legal murder of the two workers in August 1927. Allen neither knows nor cares that thousands of workers lost their jobs while other workers served long months in jail because they dared to picket and protest against the greatest frame-up in American labor history; that Sacco-Vanzetti memorial meetings are still held each year all over the world; that the Soviet Union has named two ships for the “good shoemaker” and the “poor fish-peddler.” Allen neither knows nor cares that the names of Sacco and Vanzetti will live on for generations in the memory of the working class. He and his placid readers turn easily to the next excitement of the moment—the “revolution” in manners and morals of the “younger social set.”

Thus in sprightly fashion Allen portrays his class, which represents 13% of the population owning 90% of the wealth. Future chroniclers of some other decade in the 20th century will record how the other 87% of the population, owning now only 10% of the wealth, swept away this 13%, as the harvesters sweep away dead corn-husks from under their feet.

GRACE HUTCHINS

Whither Bodenheim?

Run Sheep Run, by Maxwell Bodenheim. Liveright, Inc. \$2.00.

In his latest, Bodenheim has written a book which must be listed with the small but growing number of American revolutionary novels. He realistically shows the development of a radical bohemian youth into a class conscious fighter in the proletarian ranks.

The first part of the book shows the hero together with his poetic love living through bohemian alcoholic gatherings discussing sex and radicalism and art. Bodenheim has written of this phase of life before. However in this book the discontent of the hero with his life is clearly due to the fact that he has communist leanings. It is not mere bourgeois rebellion. But the proletarian hero is sidetracked from participation in revolutionary activity by aesthetic—bohemianism and his love affair with a bourgeois woman poet.

A communist demonstration at City Hall in which the hero from a spectator becomes a participant and receives a police drubbing motivates his return to the ranks of the workers. He goes south to work in a cotton mill and is immediately tagged as a communist and suspect. He falls in love with the working girl daughter of his landlady and when he is fired from his job the thought of his New York love impels him to return. He finds her married.

This finally determines him to enter wholeheartedly into the working class movement. He will go south and bring back his proletarian love, “make her an active rebel and live obscurely beside her for a time, working with her to earn his daily bread with the strength of his arms and legs. If the revolution ever came to America it would have to spring from people like Kathleen——.”

The best parts of the books are those about the communist demonstration and the daily life of the southern mill workers. This is an indication that Bodenheim may become a valuable novelist. In these parts of the book his writing is direct and energetic. In the early sexual scenes Bodenheim repeats what he has done before. The demonstration is an unusually graphic piece of writing. It is to be hoped that *Run Sheep Run* indicates the new direction Bodenheim’s talent will take.

JOHN HERRMANN

Norman Macleod

NOT ALL JAPANESE ARE IMPERIALISTS

The Japanese Proletarian Art Group of Los Angeles was organized over a year ago. It is composed of workers, among whom may be numbered houseworkers, pearl divers, cooks, gardeners, farm laborers, fishermen and students who are working their way through universities. They are interested in various forms of cultural expression only in so far as they serve as a weapon in the hands of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Conscious of their historic role in the class struggle, they are persistent not only upon the literary front but participate in demonstrations by passing out leaflets in English and Japanese, speaking to the masses, and carrying placards which have been made by their own comrades. Most of them are in the revolutionary movement.

In March 1931 they published the first number of *Proletarian Arts* under the editorship of Y. Miyagi. A painter and fisherman for years upon the Alaskan seaboard, the proletarian facts of Miyagi's work there, influenced by his environment, determined his form. Recently, he and other artists of the group have begun to relate their work more closely to the contemporary scene of struggle in Southern California. They take as their subject matter the conflicts and situations arising out of capitalistic oppression and persecution of the foreign born. Previous to the formation of the alliance, too many of them were passive in accepting bourgeois esthetics in spite of the fact that they were under the influence of Marxian ideology.

Proletarian Arts is a mimeographed magazine of forty pages appearing monthly. In makeup and design it compares favorably with *Senki* and other Japanese magazines of similar character. It has line cuts, poems, short stories, articles and workers' correspondence. Already it has been of service in attracting more of the Japanese to the Communist movement in California. No printed credit is given to the writers and artists in the issue to date: too many of them are either aliens or under constant surveillance by the police. At every meeting, no matter how innocuous, the red squad headed by Hines and galaxies of immigration officers convene to terrorize the workers or to break up the assembly and arrest all who look in the least likely to struggle for economic, social and political equality.

But the group continues to exist, the movement of which it is a part becomes stronger, the demonstrations grow more militant. If it is true that the United States is rapidly becoming Fascist, California insisting upon States Rights (she must always be the best in the world: her American Legions are bigger than elsewhere, her Better America Federation exceeds any similar organization in reactionary viciousness, her peaches and pansies are more abundant, etc.) has decided that one of her native sons will be the American Mussolini.

At a time when imperialist Japan continues her aggression in China, slaughtering thousands of Chinese workers and soldiers without even taking the trouble to declare war, with the tacit approval of France, England, American and Will Rogers, it is interesting to say:

*Stand, comrades!
Face against the storm.
The perilous atmospheres of oppression are moving
Before the assault.
Blood-sucking capitalists
Are hungry for blood,
The sustenance of profit.
Against capitalist war.
That is our slogan.
They starved us to be bones for cannon fodder:
That is their aim.
Stand, comrades!
Face against the storm
Until the hosts of oppression decamp
Before the force of our arms.*

The Japanese workers of Los Angeles live in close proximity to the main stem of the city, a thoroughfare crowded with preachers and pilots of religion for profit. Soup after the sermon. Benches



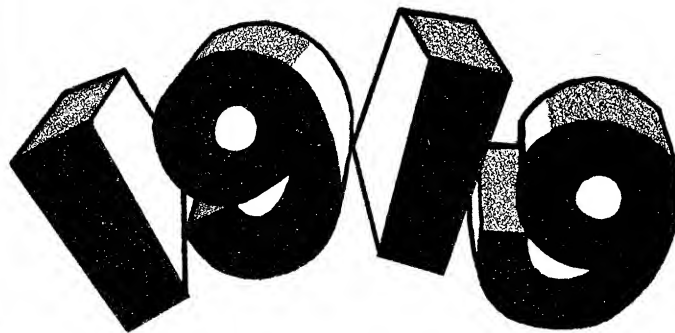
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SPEAK

with jingoistic optimism for cidertown. The whole street is floating with misery and reeking with "pie in the sky." A shop dealing in portraits of the Virgin Mary, Jesus and all the little saints on Main between Second and Third now carries a sign: SELLING OUT CHEAP. But a proletarian poet from the Japanese Group won't be sold:

*We have no need of prosperity in heaven.
Leave the bread of religion to the priest.
What we need is food and food is of earth's substance.*

*Let us arm with the knowledge of science
And drive away the mysteries from the universe.
Dreams of five fishes and five loaves are gone:
Our sight is cast upon one perspective.*

*Look! the explosion of our anger
Recoils like a cannonade.
We shield our eyes from darkness
And protect the U.S.S.R.*

*Look! the first miracle of the world:
The sun flowers factories in the land of Soviets.
All over the world the revolution like a dynamo
Electrifies the proletariat!*

In *Horse Blind-Folded*, which was published in a recent number of *Proletarian Arts*, the disillusionment of immigrants to California is described. The State of Angels and Golden Gates may have a come-hither appeal for retired farmers from the Middle West, properous gullibles easily fleeced, but for the workers and aliens (particularly, the Chinese and Japanese) she has nothing but scorn. Like a prostitute she says, "Go wan away frum here, no money man" or like a highpriced Hollywood actress, delicately, she says, "SCRAM!" But there is a solution, as the workers of the world know, and the Japanese of California know it in spite of the Criminal Syndicalist Law:

*I am like a horse blind-folded,
But with the telescope of revolution I look ahead.
Once I thought, "if I had money,"
Dreaming to be a millionaire.
But flesh and bone-wasted I walk
Year after year like a horse blind-folded.
Here I am old by twenty years
In the richest country in the world.
What have I left?
What have I got?
Debts, unemployment, starvation.
I am like a horse blind-folded.
But the tremendous bell of revolution
Has begun to peal. The time has come:
Even a stone will speak.
I am like a horse blind-folded, but I look ahead.*

The sentiment of these poems would not appeal to Mr. Hines and his Radical Squad. They would be irritated no end, but if the agencies of reactionary capitalism in California were less ignorant of the issues involved and the precarious force which will eventually topple them into the abyss of their destruction and oblivion, they might arrive at the same terrified condition to which they are striving to reduce the workers.

As a result of the formation of the Japanese Proletarian Art Group in Los Angeles and its contact with NAPF in Japan, parallel groups of Japanese Proletarian cultural Workers are now being formed in Seattle, Vancouver, Hawaii and elsewhere.

The plight and struggle of the unemployed—war plots of the Wall Street bankers—attack and defense of the Soviet Republic—masterfully portrayed in

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WORKERS ART

Reports and Discussions of Workers Cultural Activities

N. Y. JOHN REED CLUB LECTURES—Two of a series of sixteen public lectures held under the auspices of the John Reed Club have taken place—one by Joseph Freeman on "The Marxian Approach to Literature," and the other a symposium on the "Problems of the Revolutionary Writer."

Oakley Johnson, Edwin Seaver, Liston Oak, Kenneth Burke, Joshua Kunitz, Michael Gold and Joseph Freeman led the discussion on the various phases of this subject. Both lectures were well attended and the enthusiasm shown encourages the Educational Committee of the club to go ahead with its extensive program, the central purpose of which is to set forth the role of literature and art in the class struggle, and to win the support of radicalized intellectuals for the revolutionary movement.

The next two lectures will be, "Soviet Literature and Its Challenge to America", by Joshua Kunitz on March 6; and "Problems of the Revolutionary Artist" on March 13, a symposium by William Gropper, Jacob Burck, Hugo Gellert, Morris Pass, Anton Refregier and guest speakers. Following this there will be lectures on "Chinese Literature, War and Revolution"; "The Technique of the Revolutionary Short Story"; "Art and Individualism" by Hugo Gellert; and a symposium on "The Technique of the Revolutionary Cartoon."

All these lectures are open to the public. They are held at the John Reed Club, 63 West 15th Street, at 2:30 Sunday afternoons. An admission charge of 25 cents is made.

JOHN REED CLUB EXHIBIT—Paintings of Maurice Becker, Joseph Biel, and Max Spivak are now on exhibit at the John Reed Club Gallery, 63 W. 15 St., N.Y.C. Biel's "Dock Worker's Lunch" and Becker's canvas "Company Gunmen Stealing Food from Writers Relief Expedition to the Kentucky Coal Fields", are characteristic examples of the new work that the John Reed artists are doing.

I. W. O. CONCERT—The Youth Section of the International Workers Order in New York City will hold a concert March 20. This concert will be a dramatic, musical, and choral festival. The entire program will be given by members of the organization. The Dramatic Groups will present a number of short working-class plays, ranging from the realistic to the agit-prop. The I. W. O. Dance Group, under the direction of Lily Mehlman, will present new revolutionary dances; the musical part of the program will be provided by I. W. O. musicians who have won recognition in the musical world. The feature of the affair will be the appearance of the I. W. O. Youth Chorus. The concert will be held Sunday, March 20 at 2 P. M. in the Irving Plaza, 15th St., and Irving Place, New York City. Admission 35 cents.

WORKERS' CULTURAL FEDERATION—The Workers' Cultural Federation has reorganized for active work, definitely linking the cultural front in the class struggle with the economic and political fronts. Simultaneously the Federation will strive for a new orientation of our cultural movement about the slogan: American in form and proletarian in content. Several organizers are already at work cementing cultural forces and setting up a Service Buro which will act as a central clearing house for all individual and group talent (musical, dramatic, sports, vaudeville, speakers, etc.) for utilization at all affairs in the workers' movement. All those who can serve in any capacity are urged to register with the Service Buro of the Workers' Cultural Federation, 63 West 15th Street, New York. Telephone: Gramercy 5-5587.

A VOICE FROM JAPAN—Speaking in the name of the Proletarian Cultural Federation of Japan Seikiti Fujimori, proletarian novelist, asked members of the John Reed Club who heard him address a meeting of the writer's Group on February 24th to reinforce the ties between the working-class cultural movements of Japan and the United States in the face of the present war danger in the Far East.

He told of the sharp repressive measures of the fascist government of Japan against all phases of the working-class movement. The attacks on the left wing writers and artists have been inten-

sified with the recent upsurge of Japanese militarism and the imperialist adventures in China. The cultural movement is being forced out of the semi-legal position it previously was able to maintain into underground activity. A notable feature of the reaction is the desertion from the proletarian cultural movement of numerous liberals who became associated in easier times. The revolutionary writers and artists, he said, find the sympathy and support of the working-masses the only force upon which they can rely.

Comrade Fujimori is a member of the executive of the Left Wing Writers' Group, an organization of more than two hundred writers and 10,000 worker correspondents. The following resolution was unanimously passed by the club at the close of Comrade Fujimori's address and gratefully acknowledged by the speaker behalf of his Japanese comrades:

"The John Reed Club expresses its solidarity with the Japanese revolutionary writers and artists and the Japanese masses in their struggle against their imperialist ruling class as manifested in the courageous opposition to the imperialist adventures in Manchuria and Shanghai. In the face of the sharpest terror by the Japanese government, the Japanese masses, under the leadership of the heroic Communist Party of Japan, have opposed the attack upon the Chinese Revolution and the attempts to provoke the Soviet Union into war.

"We send revolutionary greetings to the revolutionary artists and writers of Japan, who have played so important a part in the opposition to Japanese imperialism and have shown magnificent solidarity with the Chinese masses in their struggles against the traitorous Kuomintang and the foreign imperialist powers.

"The John Reed Club pledges itself to fight against American imperialism and its participation in the looting and partition of China and its leading role in the preparations for armed intervention against the Soviet Union."

NATIONAL STUDENTS CONFERENCE—The provisional Executive Committee of the National Student League calls college clubs throughout the country to a conference in New York City March 28 and 29. The committee was formed by college clubs of New York, Chicago and Pittsburgh.

A national program and a national organization are the objects of the conference. The former was published in No. 2 of the *Student Review*, official organ of the League. The program includes participation in working class struggles, opposition to imperialist wars and military training in the colleges, a fight against racial and national discrimination both in and out of the colleges, for academic freedom, and for unemployment insurance for students and workers. The program of the League will also consider student problems: Unemployment among students, high tuition, heavy fees, inadequate facilities and overcrowding. A plank will deal with sports.

An organizer has been sent into the field to organize left wing campus groups. The National Student League's program is getting excellent response from the campuses.

Students and clubs interested are asked to write for further information to Homer Barton, Field Secretary, National Student League, 102 West 14th Street, New York City.

ARTISTS TAKE NOTE! Editor, *New Masses*: Please correct the misstatement published in the February issue of your magazine regarding posters to be drawn for the International Workers Athletic Meet (Counter-Olympics) in Chicago during July 1932. It should be made clear that it is NOT the Labor Sports Union which is holding the meet, but the *National Provisional Counter-Olympic Committee*, a united front of all organizations of workers, students and athletes, regardless of nationality, race or political affiliation who endorse the program of the Counter-Olympic Committee. All proceeds of preparatory events, exhibits, etc. will go to the Committee and not to the Labor Sports Union. John Reed Club artists who enter the poster competition should be sure to substitute the words *Auspices National Counter-Olympic Committee* for the words erroneously announced in your magazine. Otherwise their posters will be useless.

Fraternally yours,

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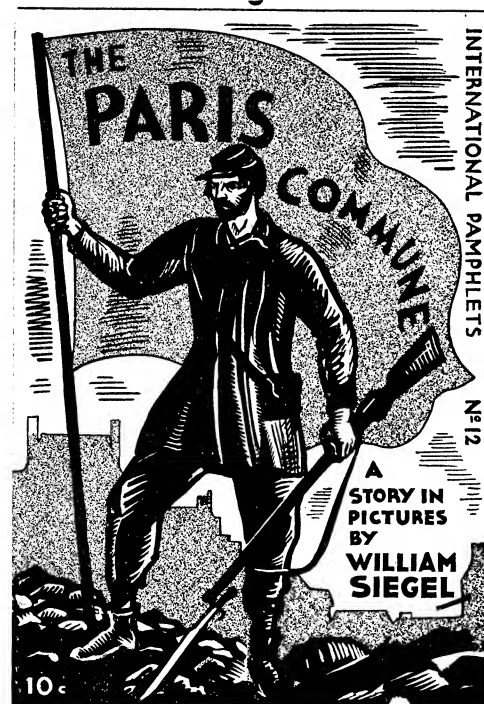
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